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In Search of the Deep Politic: *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project,* an Arts, Education and Civic Partnership

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In Search of the Deep Politic: *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project,* an Arts, Education and Civic Partnership

by

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Dedication

Whatever good found within these pages is dedicated to Stephen and Mary Lee.

Your efforts make this world a better place.

Thank You.

Acknowledgements

Writing a dissertation is a community event. The community (both the place and the relationship) in which I wrote this dissertation created a rich and rewarding place to live and to think. More importantly, this community supports attempts at positive change.

I would like to thank my family for their support. Your financial support made this work possible, your emotional support made it worthwhile.

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grace, integrity and determination to do good in the world. I respect and admire you all. Thank you.

In Search of the Deep Politic: *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project,* an Arts, Education and Civic Partnership

Publication No._____

Brent Edward Hasty, Ph. D.

The University of Texas at Austin, 2007

Supervisor: Mary Lee Webeck

In Search of the Deep Politic: Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project, an Arts, Education and Civic Partnership, explores the enactment of public scholarship through embedded case study methodology. Charting the author's experience of seeking deep political action, this case demonstrates the ways in which transdisciplinary partnerships create liminal spaces that open possibilities for pedagogic and social change. The study outlines the enactment of an arts, education and civic partnership occurring in Austin, Texas in 2005 centered in a community-based study of the Holocaust. The study seeks answers to the following questions: (a) How did community leaders envision and enact the community-based partnership *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?; (b) In what ways, if any, were the artistic, education and civic events amplified through the collaborative partnership *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?; and (c) What pedagogical possibilities occur for audiences experiencing the dance work *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?

The case demonstrates the possibilities for expanding educational impact through a community integration process, characterized by the alignment of school-based and community-based learning activities located outside traditional educational spaces using a transdisciplinary approach that combines multiple forms of representation. The embedded case of the dance reveals pedagogical possibilities for Holocaust education made possible through the dance, *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. While limitations of the form inhibit the conveyance of dense historical content, it opens possibility for exploration of dense emotional content. A close examination of the construction of the dance provides an entry point for students into important conversations about the history and representation of the Holocaust. The case study demonstrates the ways in which the *Light Project* engaged civic capacities through expanded participation, enhanced public awareness, and enhanced capacity for convening civic dialogue and contributions to public discourse. This study describes the ways in which resonance, assurances and the catalyzing forces of leaders support the effective implementation of partnerships.

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Chapter One: Introduction

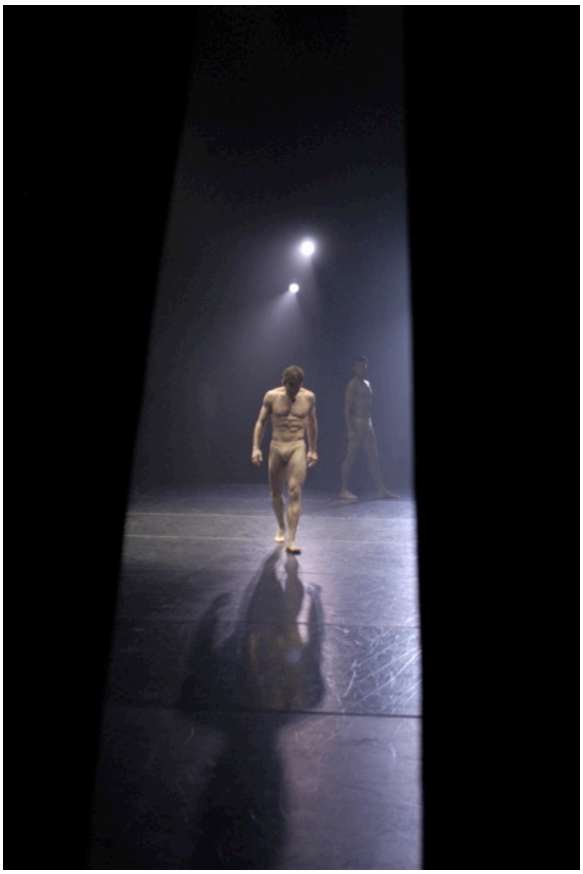

Illustration 1: Production still from *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.[1]
Photograph by Sarah Beal.

Holocaust scholar Lawrence Langer ends his book *Preempting the Holocaust* with the following paragraph:

[1] I use photographs throughout this document, not as evidentiary warrants, but to provide visual entry points for the reader to better understand the visual dimensions of the case. Generally the photographs serve a descriptive function, however in some few cases, they act more metaphorically setting the tone of the section. While many writers begin sections with a quote, I use a photographic image. As Sontag writes, "In an era of information overload, the photograph provides a quick way of apprehending something and a compact form for memorizing it. The photograph is like a quotation, or a maxim or a proverb" (Sontag, 2003, p. 22).

> The basic challenge for Holocaust educators is to begin by expanding their own sympathies and vision to include the personalities of all those involved in the disaster—criminals, victims, collaborators, and bystanders—and then gradually to extend to their students means for crossing the threshold into their historical and psychological space. Traditionally, teachers open doors of possibility for their students. In this one instance, they are obliged to open doors of impossibility, an equally compelling but more arduous task, because the obstacles to gaining entrance are so many, the usual rewards so few (1998, p. 198).

Langer's articulation of one of the paradoxes of Holocaust education, the opening of doors to possibility and impossibility, challenged me to reconsider the work my advisor Dr. Mary Lee Webeck and I were doing with a Holocaust education fellowship for pre-service teachers at a regional Holocaust Museum. I wondered how the learning in classrooms we were encouraging was being supported by the broader community. Working with a group of leaders from the artistic, educational, business, and philanthropic communities in Austin, Texas; we asked how we could actively involve the greater Austin community in addressing the difficult topic presented by the Holocaust. Could our understanding of arts integration in classrooms apply to a community project combining art, education and civic dialogue? Could studying the Holocaust foster dialogue on in/tolerance and contemporary issues of bigotry and hate through this combination of art and education? *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* (*Light Project*) provided a space to explore the role of educational practices and artful initiatives in fostering thoughtful community-wide involvement to address social dilemmas and bring voice to resounding questions about what matters in classrooms and communities. This study examines that space.

The *Light Project* attempted to create rich learning environments using multiple disciplines to create a focus on Holocaust education across the learning system of the community. Bringing together multiple sustained activities, we worked to engage the

community in an integrated learning experience by aligning activities in schools, museums, lecture halls, performance venues and public spaces. This dissertation will provide an ethnographic case study of the project, suggest a theoretical framework and useful constructs for the study of collaborative and integrative experiences, and present an analysis of pedagogical possibilities within the dance work: *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.

I focus this exploration by asking the questions:

1) How did community leaders envision and enact the community-based partnership *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?
2) In what ways, if any, were the artistic, education and civic events amplified through the collaborative partnership *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?
3) What pedagogical possibilities occur for audiences experiencing the dance work *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?

My dissertation follows an unconventional organizational structure. Chapter one provides an introduction to case study being offer in this work by introducing the reader to the project and the author's positionality. Chapter two outlines the theoretical framework that I employ to understand this work, as well as some disciplinary constructs, literature and practices from the field that might be helpful to contextualize this work. Chapter three provides an outline of the research methods employed in this study. Chapters four, five and six, present case study data focused on the envisioning and enactment of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. Chapter four focuses on the envisioning phase; chapter five focuses on the design and development phase; while chapter six focuses on the implementation phase of the project. Chapter seven presents an

embedded case study analysis of the dance, *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* including a discussion of its pedagogical possibilities for Holocaust Education. Chapter eight concludes this dissertation with a presentation of the major findings of the case.

AN OVERVIEW OF LIGHT/THE HOLOCAUST AND HUMANITY PROJECT

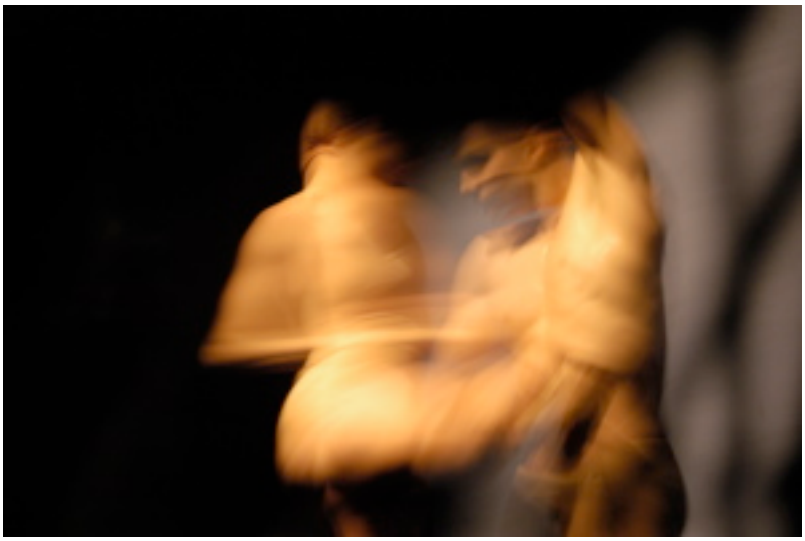

Illustration 2: Production still from *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. Photograph by Sarah Beal.

The *Light Project* began as a dream, held by three people, Stephen Mills, Ballet Austin's Artistic Director; Mary Lee Webeck, a professor at The University of Texas at Austin; and me, Brent Hasty, a doctoral candidate and arts in education specialist. Our conversations about creating educational moments that were changeful and producing a ballet that dealt sensitively with the Holocaust began eighteen months before the project came to fruition. In early writing, intended to articulate the ideas behind the project to potential advisory committee members, I said:

> We wondered what would happen if we created an environment where while students were studying the Holocaust, so was the entire community. What if you had a ballet, what if you had an art exhibit, what if you had public lectures, so that conversations that were started in classrooms were continued in performance halls, on Auditorium Shores, and in family living rooms? (Hasty, personal communication, January 2004)

As our dialogue deepened, and as our dream came closer to realization, we studied in museums; inquired through scholarship; traveled to seven Holocaust sites in Germany, the Czech Republic, and Poland; visited Israel; spoke with survivors of the Holocaust; and spent hours talking about the ideas of this project with people representing various constituencies (e.g., dance community, Jewish community, education leaders, historians, survivors, philanthropists, etc.).

The *Light Project* collaboration grew beyond our dream to include participation from a Research 1 university, a family foundation, a metropolitan ballet company, a Holocaust museum, a school district, and numerous local organizations. A small group of community leaders developed a model for artistic, educational, and community involvement to support Holocaust education and to begin community dialogue. This small leadership group included the artistic director (Stephen Mills) and the executive director of a ballet company (Cookie Ruiz), an arts-in-education specialist (Brent Hasty), an education professor at the University (Mary Lee Webeck), an international Jewish community leader (Judy Yudof), the Superintendent of schools (Pat Forgione), two business and philanthropic leaders (Tom Meredith and Kirk Rudy), and a community volunteer (Amy Rudy).

This *Light Project* leadership team, accessing the resources available to them, organized activities constituting the *Light Project*, including:

1. A public lecture series with three lectures:
    a. "Representing the Holocaust" with J. Young, R. Abzug and S. Mills
    b. "Talking to Young People about the Holocaust and Hate" with M.L. Webeck and P. Bos

c. “An Evening with Elie Wiesel” with Elie Wiesel

2. A month long outdoor public art exhibit (Coexistence) from Israel’s Museum on the Seam
3. A two-day professional development institute for 75 middle and high school teachers
4. A series of community dialogues
5. A world premiere ballet
6. A televised Town Hall Meeting hosted by Linda Ellerbee

In addition to these public events the project created opportunities for ongoing museum and university-based professional development opportunities for pre- and in-service teachers and artists; the creation of educational materials; the development of a framework for community engagement in civic dialogue; and dissemination of the work through research, presentation, and publication in varying formats. This project did not develop a specific curriculum to be enacted by teachers or teaching artists, but rather provided multiple resources for the participants to generate their own curricular enactments.

Chapter Two: Review of Theoretical and Disciplinary Constructs

Illustration 3: Production still from *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. Photograph by Amitava Sarkar.

A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK OF MOVEMENT

Studying the role of the educative potentialities of the arts in a community integration project focused on the Holocaust calls for a theoretical framework that links the arts to community, the individual to society, and offers ways to conceptualize how difficult topics like the Holocaust are represented and understood in classrooms, in public art, dialogue, and in a dance. This study also needed a theoretical frame to contextualize the movement—physical, personal, and metaphoric—that occurred in our project. To construct this frame, I draw from notions of the deep politic (Gitlin, 2005; Gitlin & Peck, 2005), liminality (Conroe, 2004, Turner, 1969), transdisciplinarity (Meeth, 1978; Moss, Osborn & Kaufman, 2003), resonance (Conle, 1996) and anomalous places of learning

(Ellsworth, 2005). These lenses allow me to look within and beyond familiar borders to explore the role of art in creating resonant learning experiences. Specifically, each of these constructs connotes movement in some way, edging me to new conceptual understandings and new ways in which to envision arts and learning.

The Deep Politic

I position myself squarely in the center of this project. I come to this work as an arts-in-education consultant with ten years experience building educational arts-based performance programs and working with artists and teachers in the application of curriculum integration strategies. I am often asked to speak to organizations across the U.S. on the topic of integrating community arts and cultural resources into the classroom. I also come to the project as the partner of Stephen Mills, the choreographer of the ballet. This relationship allowed us to share ideas throughout the conceptualization of the project. We traveled together to Houston, to Eastern Europe, and to Israel as a part of our preparation. I am involved socially with many members of the philanthropic community through my association with the ballet and my other volunteer activities.

I come to the topic of the Holocaust, not from a Jewish tradition, but from a gay perspective. Coming of age in the early 80's, when young people were asked to wear the pink triangle as a source of pride down the neighborhood streets the gays called the "gay ghetto", threw me into an awkward relationship with a study of the Holocaust. How could this Nazi designed patch be reconfigured as a badge of pride? Later I began to see how the patch played an important role in gay visibility within Holocaust museums.

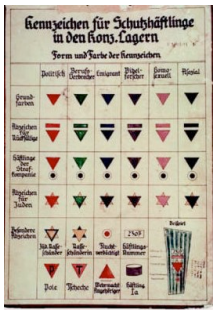

Illustration 4: Chart of Nazi Classification System

The list of "other victims" almost always accompanied the ubiquitous triangle identification chart in Holocaust history museum exhibitions. Or was it the other way around? Did the compelling artifact require an explanation that included the listing of "others?" Was the patch the requirement for visibility within Holocaust museum context?

While studying at Holocaust sites in Poland and Germany, I was disillusioned, but not surprised; there was no barrack dedicated to the Homosexual experience at Auschwitz. The memorial for the gays at Sachsenhaussen was not on our tour or even acknowledged on the guide map. I made these observations during a time when anti-gay bias was being used as a political tool to mobilize the American conservative voters. Gays and gay marriage were charged with threatening the traditional marriage and destroying American families. While in Israel, I stood thirty feet from the stabbing of two men participating in a Gay Rights parade. I live in what feels like a hostile time against gays. I am reminded of the question students of the Holocaust often ask, "Why didn't the Jews just leave… go to America?" when my gay friends discuss over dinner the merits of moving to Europe or Canada. Some counter the move by citing the rise of anti-Semitism in Europe and the weakness of the dollar against most foreign currencies. Would the benefits of being in the center of the universe (arguably Paris or London) overcome these

shortcomings? But we all stay – despite our sense of discomfort – because of our current comforts. We stay and search for a way to make changes in our own communities, to capitalize on our positions of power while minimizing our positions of subjugation.

The creation of this project is a product of this search to make changes, my private search made public in service of the deep politic (Gitlin, 2005). What would a serious study of the Holocaust mean for this historic moment? Gitlin challenges educators and scholars to think about the "location or the positionality of inquirer, by looking at what it means to challenge the status quo, and by trying to consider issues of representation as they relate to a change process that addresses social inequities" (Gitlin, 2005, p. 22). The notion of deep politic is centered in the act of (re)imagining the everyday politic. This notion inspired me to (re)imagine how my position as a scholar, as an arts in education consultant and as a community volunteer with some privilege, as a gay man, might effect some change in my community. This search for the deep politic questions the role of researchers in public scholarship, the role of arts organizations in civic dialogue and the role of dance in education, all in service to a struggle to confront acts of bigotry and hate.

In addition to motivating me personally, Gitlin's (2005; Gitlin & Peck, 2005) notion of a deep politic guided our conceptualization and enactment of the *Light Project*. Gitlin characterized the deep politic as working towards social change by examining the everyday from an "epistemic stance that points to the relations between power, representation and identity" (Gitlin, 2005, p. 16). In our case, we questioned the status quo in Holocaust education and representation. I remain fascinated by the paradoxical ways in which the Holocaust is both easy to understand and impossible to comprehend. This significant historic event receives only brief reference in many schools in our

community. Why is it, we wondered, that many people do not know much about specifics of the Holocaust? Was it "impossible to represent the experiences of the Holocaust in a ballet," as many inside and outside the dance world suggested, including New York dance critic Clive Barnes (C. Barnes, personal communication, December, 2004)? Can the historical density (Lang, 2000) of the Holocaust be represented in movement? If not, what are the implications for understanding? Is a representational form without the capacity to communicate historical density too fragile to provide an ethical treatment of the topic? Is the Holocaust too complex, or too distant, or too identified with one group of people, or too painful to foster broad and dynamic community exploration? As a predominantly non-Jewish group, could our working team find the authority, and find support within the Jewish community, to lead these explorations in our communities? These questions focused our attention on expressions of power and status quo.

Gitlin's post-structural arguments interrogate the ways in which power circulates through cultural practice in the service of a critical agenda. Aesthetics and the imagination, Gitlin suggests, help us envision a world different from the "everyday images [which] saturate our body, mind, and soul" (2005, p. 16). Through an examination of community norms and values often taken for granted, we questioned our relationship with the embedded power structures of the everyday politic. While Holocaust education focused our work, we acknowledged acts of bigotry and hate, writ large and small, occurring throughout our community, our nation and the world.

In the search for the deep politic, we wanted to make our inquiry more public by involving our community in the same lines of questioning. As our planning continued, our leadership team drew further from the resources of our community to include members of city government (our mayor and city manager), university administration,

leadership from the Anti-Defamation League, leadership from our PBS affiliate, the director of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library and Museum, members of Austin's Jewish community, and representatives from a public relations firm.

Our attempts to engage in civic dialogue encouraged us to pose three questions at each of the *Light Project's* events:

- How are the issues of the Holocaust relevant in our community today?
- What is our responsibility when confronted with acts of bigotry and hate?
- What actions can we take to promote understanding in our community?

By asking these questions whenever we convened events, we often disrupted social conventions and norms. We tried to imagine the possibilities of more acts of deep politic in theaters, classrooms, and public events throughout the *Light Project*, across spaces and across disciplines.

Liminality

Transdisciplinarity, resonance and anomalous spaces of learning share a common space. Interstitial, they are neither central nor fringe. They exist as liminal spaces. As the word liminal has been adopted outside the field of anthropology, its meaning has altered. Turner (1967) used the word to recognize a socially constructed ritual space that marked personal transformations like rites of passage rituals. Unrooting the term from its personally transformative character, to a more general interstitial state, "betwixt and between" (Turner, 1969, p. 95) allowed that normalized constructions of time, power, roles, ideals, customs, etc, might be temporarily suspended. Turner referred to these more generalized instances as liminoidal (Turner, 1969). For discussion outlined in this paper, I will use the more generalized understanding of liminality.

Conroe (2004) suggests liminality might "offer possibility of deliberately displacing our understanding, beliefs, ideals outside the realm of others, or indeed our own, socio-psychological containment in order to view them afresh" (p. 7). The *Light Project* created interstitial spaces betwixt and between disciplines, time, place and intentions.

James Conroe uses the metaphor of liminality to support a conception of community building that situates our strangeness as central to living together. Turner argued that liminal spaces suspend the status bonds that rule community by forming a relationship in liminal spaces he referred to as communitas (1969). Turner preferred the Latin term for community to represent social relationships community, to distinguish it from the place geographical implications the word community often conjures. Turner suggests that people behave in liminal spaces in ways that are different from the norm, more importantly different from their norm. In so doing, they set up a relationship with themselves that recognizes their own otherness. Otherness, therefore, becomes a common condition. Conroe suggests if one can recognize the authenticity of otherness in the self, one should have "no difficulty in acknowledging that of the other" (Conroe, 2004, p. 57).

The implications of using liminal spaces to promote a self-awareness that creates stronger community bonds seems, and seemed to us, rich with potential. If as Conroe said, "Communitas is not built by extinguishing otherness but…. as an inherent condition of all" (p. 57), the *Light Project* offered an opportunity to create a myriad of liminal spaces.

The term community, in this paper, will be used variably to describe the three primary categories of meanings outlined by Lee and Newby (1983):

1) Community defined as a geographical place, by a separation from an institutions like a school;
2) Community defined as a social system, by a set of formal and informal relationships to order local interactions;
3) Community defined as a sense of identity, by a type of relationships characterized by "shared meaning and mutual cooperation" (Revill, 1993, p. 119).

Transdisciplinarity

The notion of transdisciplinarity framed our partnership and guided the envisioning and enactment of the *Light Project*. According to Meeth, "Whereas interdisciplinary programs start with the discipline, transdisciplinary programs start with the problem and, through the process of problem solving, bring to bear the knowledge of those disciplines that contributes to a solution or a resolution" (1978, p. 10).

Moss et al, suggested that a transdisciplinary way of knowing, "illustrates a pivotal move away from the individual parts toward a multifaceted whole" (2003, p. 7). Thus, as individuals representing differing professional and institutional perspectives, taking a transdisciplinary stance positioned us each to look at our problem and goals together. In the ongoing conversations with our colleagues at Holocaust Museum Houston and members of the Survivor community in Austin and Houston, the members of the project leadership team looked more closely within our fields of expertise to identify the richest resources to bring to the group, and looked *beyond* what we knew comfortably to seek solutions through other ways of thinking and knowing. Rather than a superficial combination of multiple disciplines, our project asked professionals in each discipline to bring their perspective to bear on exploring issues of Holocaust education

and representation. In this way, our project sought to circumvent the dilemma so commonly discussed in interdisciplinary arts work, whereby one subject becomes subservient to another (McCarthy et al, 2004; Winner & Cooper, 2000).

Transdisciplinarity provided the framework for our partnership to attempt moves beyond a simple transactional relationship among organizations toward institutional collaboration by focusing our individual work on our shared mission (Dreeszen, 1992; Seidel et al, 2001; McCarthy, 2004). Institutional collaboration would help create an examination of our problem from multiple perspectives, with multiple constituencies, using multiple domains in multiple spaces. Transdisciplinarity would guide the Light Project in both programmatic content and organizational structure in an attempt to amplify the impact of individuals, of each event, and of the project.

Resonance

Ideally, education creates connections and fosters change. Through the *Light Project*, we wanted to create educational experiences that were resonant. We believed there was value in exploring the idea of resonance, a metaphoric relational process, which Conle described as "a way of seeing one experience in terms of another" (1996, p. 299). As Conle suggested, resonance permits learners to:

> engage in various ways with what they know tacitly and to move that knowledge, so to speak, without having to make it explicit. The term *move* here is deliberately vague. . . , the ways someone's knowledge changes through resonance is unpredictable (1996, p. 299).

Using this idea, we wanted to amplify the possibilities of connection. Creating experiences that might connect, or asking participants to extend their experiences through interactions with art, texts, sounds, and images, would help us to create a structure within which resonant learning interactions could occur.

Dewey warned in Democracy and Education "[knowledge, beliefs, ideas] cannot be passed physically from one to another like bricks; they cannot be shared as persons would a pie by dividing it into physical pieces" (1916, p. 4). Writing eighty-four years after Dewey, Mary Catherine Bateson explored the same idea:

> If you want people to change their minds, you have to address them as minds in motion, not as static receptacles, and help them acknowledge that every opinion has a story. If you want them to embrace strangeness, you can help them connect it to analogues of widening familiarity (p. 236).

Similarly, Van Maanen suggested that people construct meaning through an interpretive process, "Making something of a text or of a lived experience by interpreting its meaning is more accurately a process of insightful invention, discovery or disclosure—grasping and formulating a thematic understanding is not a rule-bound process but a free act of 'seeing' meaning" (p. 79). These notions of the educative process as open, generative and intertextual help describe the ways in which learning moments achieve resonance through connections and amplifications of experience, understanding and the imagination.

As Conle noted, "When a story reverberates within us and calls forth another in an echo-like fashion, we pull that remembered story out of a previous context and place it into a new one" (1996, p. 301). Mary Lee and I took particular care in designing the *Light Project* to consider what Conle called the "decisive factor… what to put next to what" (Conle, 1996, p.301). We provided multiple-layered experiences in multiple sensory modes in order to create multiple entry points for meaning making. For example, our project leadership team erected Coexistence, an internationally juried outdoor art exhibition of forty-five works in a waterfront park at our city's center to reduce the possible barriers of time and place. We created a world premiere ballet to reduce the

possible barriers of language. We created lectures to reduce the possible barriers of vagueness and to raise the public's awareness of some issues that surround Holocaust education and representation. In order to reduce the possible barrier of the ordinary and the expected, we promoted learning in anomalous spaces in our community. Such spaces, Elizabeth Ellsworth suggests, may create a sense of heightened awareness (Ellsworth, 2005). By creating more such spaces, we imagined that we could contribute something positive to our community, in a way that resonated with people to create changeful actions.

Anomalous Places of Learning

Like the notions of transdisciplinarity and resonance, Ellsworth's work surrounding anomalous places of learning suggests the need to look, hear, perceive, and respond in new ways, in spaces/places that "seek… new ways of knowing that also transform knowledge, self-experience, awareness, understanding, appreciation, memory, social relations, and the future" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 37). In the *Light Project* the anomalous spaces under investigation included learning throughout the planning and implementation of the project, learning moments in a museum, in an outdoor art exhibit, in a university conference center, and moments in a theater. These spaces added to the range of possible experiences in the partnership of the *Light Project*.

For example, dance performances in the theater can create a "pivot place that puts inside and outside, self and other, personal and social into relation" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 38). Within this transitional space, the viewer is asked to "willingly suspend disbelief" in an attempt to construct an interpretation that combined narrative and abstract references. The effect of lights, sound, setting and bodies in space can create an active relationship with the viewing self, accentuating the paradox of active cognition and passive

physicality of the interpreting audience. It is in this relationship that the viewer can construct a personal response to the public acts of performance, relying on images and narratives accessible through the references made possible in the movement. In this liminal space, betwixt and between referent and interpretation, the anomalous space of the performance can achieve pedagogic status. The possibilities within these interpretive acts create a "continuous unfolding and qualitative transformation, its endlessly open potential for qualitative change and augmentation" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 175).

Rather than a mimetic expression with single referents, dance experiences might construct a more Deleuzian fold (Deleuze, 1993; Ndalianis, 2004), a non-linguistic "becoming" through which prior knowledge could shape interpretive interactions and individuals assigned personal meanings within a range of possibilities, in similar ways to Conle's (1996) construct of resonance, e.g., connections and amplifications between ideas. Similar experiences occurred as project participants responded to the images and texts of the Coexistence exhibit, to Pagis' poem "Written in Pencil in a Sealed Railway Car," and to paintings created by a survivor of the Holocaust. In each case, individuals constructed meaning for themselves. The range of possibilities in these experiences are not dereferentialized, but rather more appropriately characterized as referentially open. As educators, we imagine that moments in the *Light Project* created spaces in which people could experience that "place between knowledge already made and knowledge in the making" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 174). The dance performance, with the confluence of image and sound engaging cognitive and emotional responses, "becomes the force that sets interior self-experience in motion to encounter the outside 'not me' " (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 38). It is precisely in this encounter that the educative is possible.

DISCIPLINARY UNDERSTANDING AND CONVENTIONS

Illustration 5: Production still from *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

The theoretical frames of transdisciplinarity, resonance and anomalous places of learning help me to understand how experiences in an arts partnership might move us from acts of everyday politic toward a deep politic. Together these frames provide a way of conceptualizing an interaction among: a) ideas engaged through multiple disciplines; b) the dynamic intensities of relationships (among people, ideas, events) and the amplification of meanings; and c) the power of place and space for learning.

Activities of the *Light Project* occurred in multiple disciplinary fields. To more fully understand the case, we must consider: the complexities of Holocaust education; the

possibilities of civic dialogue through the arts; and the practices of arts education and arts education partnerships. The following section situates the project within these disciplinary fields. Lastly, I frame the ways in which Holocaust representation, as expressed through existing scholarship, guided the project, the making of the dance and my personal inquiries. The challenges of Holocaust representation resonated throughout our conversations, as artists, as teachers, as program designers, as citizens.

Issues in Holocaust Education

Many have said, in different ways, the Holocaust is either unknowable or unsayable, or both, and just as many have countered this notion (See Lang, 2000; Bauer, 2001; Rothberg, 2000; Young, 2000a, 2000b; Langer, 1995; Lentin, 2004). Still, educators, artists, museum curators, and scholars continue attempts to make the Holocaust understandable with a kind of urgency different from other important historical moments. The Holocaust holds an iconic place in Western culture, serving as a cautionary tale against cruelty, prejudice and hate. As Abzug writes, "Our culture has made scenes of … what we now call the Holocaust into universal symbols of humankind's inhuman capacities" (Abzug, 1985, p. 172). Each symbol calls into the discourse a constellation of tropes used to frame our understanding. The stories of the Holocaust heard in the U.S. often include redemptive elements including tales of personal heroism, sacrifice, death serving the cause of justice, the ability to overcome severe adversities, and the transcendent power of love over hate. These themes constitute what are often called, but seldom well articulated, the lessons of the Holocaust.

Michman points out the ways in which national context, or "linguistic-cultural sphere" shapes narratives that are "influenced by its own collective memory and contemporary agenda" (Michman, 2003, p. 379). He offers examples of the German

emphasis on the National Socialist perpetrators, the Israeli emphasis on the Jewish victim and the French emphasis on the resistance and liberation "bystanders". Although these nationalistic explanations are admittedly reductive, they do begin to illustrate the ways in which social discourses influence the construction of understanding of the Holocaust. As Young (1990) reminds us, this is not only an issue of historiography, but also of epistemology. The telling and retelling of stories stands towards the center of knowledge construction in a space where the forms of representations simultaneously provide for and limit understanding (Eisner, 2002).

Young points out that the "Events of the Holocaust are not only shaped post factum in their narration, but … they were initially determined as they unfolded by the schematic ways in which they were apprehended, expressed and acted upon" (Young, 1990, p. 5). He suggests that the understanding of, reactions to, and recording of the events are not only perspectival constructs, but also epistemological ones. Our understandings in education respond to issues of both representation and interpretation (Eisner, 2002), as we construct an understanding of the Holocaust using the discourses we have available (Young, 2000). In constructing an understanding, as Young states, "Literary and historical truths of the Holocaust may not be entirely separable" (1990, p. 1).

As Raul Hilberg suggested, "The Holocaust is the same; it cannot change. But the world in which we live . . . changes the meaning of the Holocaust as time passes before our eyes" (1991, p.19). Given the necessity of documenting and responding to the political and social history of the Holocaust, wrought with "difficult knowledge" (Britzman, 1998, p.119; Schweber, 2006), expressed in different "linguistic-cultural spheres" (Michman, 2003), informed by research and writing that constructs an

understanding of the Holocaust from different historical and political orientations (Stone, 2003), how might teachers approach Holocaust education?

Holocaust educators enter into and try to build a personal understanding of one of the most conceptually and historically difficult human experiences, then they share their understanding with students (Bergen, 2003; Hirsch & Kacandes, 2004; Postone & Santer, 2003; Riley & Totten, 2002; Schweber, 2004, 2006; Totten, 2002). It is clear that educators make serious considerations and complex decisions when they teach about the Holocaust. Recent findings from a study conducted by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (Donnelly, 2006) indicate that amongst the 327 respondents to a national survey, 75% report teaching the Holocaust in one of their middle or high school classes. The instruction occurred during English/language arts courses (66% of respondents) and U.S. history (33% of respondents). One third of the teachers reported they teach the Holocaust as its own unit. Within English courses it was often considered as part of a unit on multicultural literature. For history teachers, the instruction was most frequently embedded in units on war crimes and human rights (39%), the U.S. involvement in WWII (34%) and WWII from an international perspective (29%). Most teachers reported that their sources of Holocaust knowledge were gained informally (85%), in university undergraduate course (53%), in high school (51%), from US museums (48%) or from web research (47%). Surprisingly, few (23%) reported that their experiences and preparation for teaching about the Holocaust were influenced by professional development opportunities, although those that participated in professional development on the Holocaust generally spent more time on the topic.

In the sixty years since the end of World War II, understanding the Holocaust and its implications for education continues as an ever-emergent and ever-problematized area of scholarship (Schweber, 2004, 2006; Bos, 2004; Totten, 2002). Hoffman writes:

> We inevitably contemplate the Shoah from an ever-growing distance -- temporal, geographical, cultural -- with all the risks of simplification implicit in such remoteness… How should we, then, from our distance, apprehend it? What meanings does the Holocaust hold for us today -- and how are we going to pass on those meanings to subsequent generations? (Hoffman, 2005, pp. ix).

The problem of simplification is compounded by Schweber's concern for trivialization, "Where I once worried that the sanctification of the Holocaust stifled learning, I now worry that the trivialization of the Holocaust impedes its understanding" (Schweber, 2006, p. 44). Gitlin's notion of developing a deep politic of awareness, to "see anew in ways that are not totally saturated with the known" (2005, pp. 17), guides this investigation to understand the possibilities for difficult learning. This dissertation aims to deeply engage in an examination of the ways Holocaust education might focus more explicitly on aesthetic experience, deep inquiry, and imagination.

Issues in Civic Dialogue and the Arts

According to Carlborg, Korza, & Schaffer-Bacon (2005), art is changeful, for art "expresses difficult ideas through metaphor" (p.2); "creates indelible images" (p.6); and "communicates beyond the limits of language" (p. 14). Despite the historical role of the arts in engaging social change, at this historic moment, "The arts world is rarely mentioned in the world of civic engagement" (Martha McCoy, head of Study Circles Resource Center, a national organization devoted to community dialogues, quoted in Korza et al, 2005, p. 3).

A few organizations have begun to formalize and organize around the ideas of art and community action. Organizations like the Institute on the Arts and Civic Dialogue, created by Artist Anna Deaver Smith "grew out of a perceived need for imaginative ways to convene conversations on social issues" (Smith, 2006). Smith imagines the possibility to "ignite a new generation of artists who will be able to combine skill, artistic virtuosity and the intellectual passion to pose powerful questions about the state of our world and the ever evolving human condition" (Smith, 2006). The institute focuses on promoting the creation of this kind of work. Americans for the Arts, with funding from the Ford Foundation, funded and conducted research on Civic Dialogue and the Arts in an initiative called Animating Democracy.

Initiatives, like these, seem to foster a shift in the role of the arts from social critique towards civic participation. Korza explains**,** "Artists, cultural organizations, and their community partners are helping to shape a new paradigm of civic participation by tapping the power of the arts and humanities" (Korza et al, 2005, p. 7). Kester (1998) suggests the combination of aesthetic transgressions and the moral dimensions of aesthetic knowledge create an opportunity for change. The combination of seeing aesthetic work outside of the conventional boundaries coupled with the possibility of imagining a more just world, creates opportunities for social change. In our early project planning, we discussed our desire to reposition the role of large arts organizations as a convener of civic dialogue.

Issues in Arts Education

Similarly, Mary Lee and I considered how we might contribute to the ways in which arts education experiences were conceived in our community. A survey of arts instruction in U.S. schools, conducted by the National Center for Educational Statistics in

2002, suggested that while schools offer some arts courses, the allocation of resources is unevenly distributed across regions, subject matter, grade levels, and arts disciplines (NCES, 2002). Inequities of resource distribution for the arts exist in allocations of money, staff positions, teaching time, classroom space, as well as provisions of curriculum (NCES, 2002; NCES, 1998). According to the NAEP-Arts Assessment, ninety percent of schools reported not having a state or local curriculum for dance, 85% reported no curriculum for theatre, 28% reported no curriculum for music, and 36% reported no curriculum to follow for visual arts (NCES, 1998). At the local level, the access to arts education is not consistently delivered. The report states:

> [While] 81 percent of schools report that their students are taught music at least once a week, only one in four eighth-graders in these programs report actually singing or playing a musical instrument at least once a week. In addition, less than one in four students attend schools where dance or theater is offered (NCES, 1998, p. 3).

Within this uneven environment of services for arts education, issues of quality have been raised for those existing programs. The achievement results on the National Assessment of Educational Progress – Arts were mixed. The U.S. Department of Education framed the results as an opportunity. "The NAEP 1997 Arts Assessment illustrates the gap between the expectations for student achievement found in the NAEP Framework and the reality found in the schools" (NCES, 1998, p.3).

Despite the grim portrait of the arts described in these documents, advocacy materials position the arts as a source of redemption for ailing schools. A school superintendent is quoted in an Arts Education Partnership report. She claims, "You can show the arts are a part of a solution to virtually every challenge faced by schools today" (Deasy, 2000). These arguments seem to construct an implicit causal argument that if

schools are failing while lacking arts, then the addition of arts programs will give schools an advantage for success.

Halloway & Krensky (2001) forward three historical justifications for the educational value of the arts. In one perspective, the arts serve as a civilizing force. They suggest the arts have been historically promoted in schools for their refining qualities. Tied into discourses of cultural literacy, the arts, it is suggested, provided the dispositions and activities of the leisure class. In current times, this argument is framed in positive social development terms, including increased skills in cooperative learning and group problem solving skills. This progressive argument is also furthered through the enlightenment discourses of progress and the counter discourses of cultural hegemony. Even in critical circles, the arts are forwarded as social equalizers (Annenberg, 2003). While museums and other public arts facilities certainly may serve as spaces of possibility, the criticism of the arts for reinscribing the hegemonic forces of cultural capital and official knowledge (Apple, 2004) constructs spaces of impossibility.

In a second, more romantic view of the arts, the arts serve as vehicles for self-expression and self-discovery. Creative acts are conceptualized as personal and expressive. As Eisner suggests, "the arts are a means of exploring our own interior landscape" (2002, p. 11). He articulates gracefully the ways in which the processes of the arts promote a kind of self-awareness not found outside the aesthetic.

A third perspective recognizes the transformational qualities of the arts. The ability to imagine the possibilities, fostered in the arts, Greene suggests "creates spaces in which anything is possible" (Greene, 1995). For example, Dorothy Heathcote describes personal transformations occurring when performers adopt the mantle of the expert (Heathcote & Bolton, 1995). Boal (1979) emphasizes the social transformations made

possible through the theater. Building on Friere's Pedagogy of the Oppressed (1970), Boal describes working with communities to help volunteers dramatize problems in order to affect social change.

In this historic moment, the discussion has focused on a constructed binary of purposes, opposing these essentialist's claims of transformation and expressions with instrumental claims of educational benefit (Eisner, 2002; Hetland et al, 2001; Deasy, 2000, 2002). Researchers offer instrumental benefits from study in the arts including language development, improved story comprehension, increased spatial reasoning and mathematics achievement, among others (Winner et al, 2000; Arts Education Partnership, 2000, 2002).

McCarthy et al (2004) extend this argument by articulating instrumental and intrinsic benefits within a continuum of impact on public and private interests. They outline benefits of both types distinguishing between those that primarily serve the individual from those serving the public. They acknowledge a middle range of benefits that are private with public implications. The private intrinsic benefits outlined in their review of the literature include captivation and pleasure. Extended capacity for empathy and cognitive growth were identified as intrinsic personal values with public impact. Public intrinsic values listed in the report included the creation of social bonds and the expression of communal meanings. McCarthy et al (2004) outlined the private instrumental benefits of the arts described in the literature in terms of: cognitive effects (improved academic performance, improved basic skills and improved attitudes or metacognitive strategies); attitudinal behaviors (attitudes and behaviors that improve school performance); life-skill development (teamwork, behavioral consequences); and improved pro-social behavior of kids identified as at-risk (social bonds, improved self-

image). Health effects were included from the art therapy research literature. The report outlined instrumental benefits that had social impact including community-building activities (social interaction, sense of community identity, building of social capital and increased capacity and infrastructure) and economic benefits (direct economic gain, indirect gains and public-good gains like quality of life improvements). They constructed a useful framework for considering these benefits:

Instrumental Benefits ↑		
Improved test scores	Improved self efficacy Learning skills Health	Development
Private Benefits ←	**Private Benefits with Public spillover**	**→ Public Benefits**
Captivation	Expanded capacity for empathy	Creation of Social bonds
Pleasure	Cognitive Growth	Expression of communal meaning
↓ **Intrinsic Benefits**		

Figure 1: Benefits of the arts by McCarthy et al (2004).

Despite, or because of, the multiple visions of purpose, school and community partnerships in the arts offer a hopeful space of imaginative possibilities. Guided by this understanding, the *Light Project* attempted to access both public and private benefits through a community integration of the arts.

Issues of Arts Integration

Participation in educational initiatives is critical for the sustained health of arts organizations (RAND, 2001). Inclusion of arts organizations is critical for successful

school district's arts programs (Longley, 1999). Schools, nationwide, are accessing these community resources to a high degree. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics, in 1999-2000 seventy-seven percent of schools sponsored field trips to art galleries or museums. Thirty- eight percent of schools sponsored visiting artists, while 22% sponsored an artist in residence (NCES, 2002). These statistics suggest partnerships between schools and arts and cultural organizations are widespread, however research also suggests the quality of relationship among schools and arts and cultural organizations varies in degrees of commitment and collaboration (McCarthy, 2004; Dreeszen, 1992).

Charles Dreeszen identifies a continuum of partnerships that range from a *simple transactional* stage to a more fully developed *institutional collaboration*. The transactional stage is a relationship in which the arts group and school participate in a vendor-consumer relationship with no participant planning or design of the program from schools and little or no needs assessment or adaptation of the program to suit school needs or interests. Dreeszen reports that linkages in institutional collaborations "are intense and the organizational structures are relatively complicated" (1992, paragraph 19). The partners are "united behind a shared mission" (Dreeszen, 1992, paragraph 19).

In these institutionalized partnerships, the individual needs of each partner are served, allowing them to bring unique expertise to the collaboration, while allowing them to leverage their participation in ways that extend their ability to achieve commonly shared goals (Remer, 1996; Dreeszen, 1992). As partnerships become more intense, reason suggests the effects of the relationship will also become more intense, but little direct research has been published regarding the impacts of these partnerships on arts and cultural organizations (McCarthy, 2004; Remer, 1996). Thriving arts partnerships, in

addition to achieving common student achievement goals, maintain and improve program qualities; build and maintain strong relationships; develop strong leadership and secure adequate funding and resources (McCarthy, 2004; Seidel, 2001; Remer, 1996; Dreeszen, 1992). Our project attempted to extend the ways in which these kinds of actions and interactions could transfer outside the classroom context to partnerships that involved multiple organizations creating learning moments inside and outside of schools, with learners of all ages. Our project team hoped our work would create an impact in the arts world, but also create new possibilities for Holocaust education.

Issues in Holocaust Representation

During the conception and enactment of the *Light Project*, our project team wrestled with an essential question of Holocaust Studies: How do you represent the Holocaust in art? Scholars in the field often ask the question: How do you represent the Holocaust in the visual arts or literature? They sometimes ask the question of music, but dance and movement rarely, if at all, receive mention in the literature of Holocaust representation.

As we attempted to construct our project, we trusted Ulrich Baer's suggestion that aesthetics acknowledge the conceptual distance between attempts to understand and explain the events that occurred and the actual atrocities (Baer, 2000). We thoughtfully developed our theoretical understanding of the particular pathway we had chosen. We began with a study of the field of Holocaust representation.

While Theodor Adorno's famous admonishment that poetry after the Holocaust is barbarity (1981) surely gave us pause, we also heard Lang's hesitant that the danger of silence exceeded the risks encountered in representing the Holocaust (2000). We struggled between the demand to "never forget" through retelling the stories of the

experience, and our desire not to re-inscribe or re-inflict even a modicum of the pain suffered during the Holocaust through the retelling.

We struggled with the challenge of representing a topic of such historical density (Lang, 2000). Lang asked:

> What place can there be for the imagination or even for representation itself? What space can be left for authors who commit themselves to images of a composite event so dense morally and historically as to leave the imagination little room in which to move or to act? (Lang, 2000, p. 37).

Young helped us see the ways in which metaphor mediated the demand for facts in historical accounts when he wrote, "Rather than seeing metaphors as threatening to the facts of the Holocaust, we must recognize that they are our only access to the facts, which cannot exist apart from the figures delivering them to us" (1990, p. 91).

Members of our project team struggled with the inability of aesthetic representations to articulate the range of Holocaust experiences differing across time, place, and individual (Michman, 2003). Having not experienced the Holocaust, we struggled to construct an understanding through other people's memories – or other people's sense of other people's memory –circulating through popular culture or through scholarship, or any number of other mediated experiences of what Young calls "our received history" and an exploration of our "vicarious past" (Young, 2000a).

We also struggled with why we were telling this story. Was our action what the Freudian's call a shield memory, an act of disguising the need to explore some other trauma? (Bos, 2005). Members of our project team struggled with how you make the Holocaust more understandable to general audiences through images and iconography, while remaining sensitive to the overuse of images and artifacts that have become iconic [e.g. swastika, striped uniforms, goose stepping, etc.] (Schweber, 2004; Abzug, 1987;

Lentin, 2004). In the construction of the *Light Project*, we took care not to reduce moments, images, or movement to images of kitsch or meaningless codes (Mintz, 2001, 2004; Friedlander, 1984; Lentin, 2004). We struggled with the creation of expressions that captured presence through absence (Young, 1993).

As scholars participating in this act of public engagement, Mary Lee and I brought these questions from the literature to our discussions with artists, designers and dancers as they were creating the ballet; teachers as they were preparing to teach about the Holocaust; the organizing committee as we were planning and implementing the project and the community through our programming choices of events, speakers and lecture topics. We recognized Mintz's suggestion that "the Holocaust can necessarily be perceived only through the cultural lens of the community that engages it" (Mintz, 2004, paragraph 9). Therefore Mary Lee and I felt a keen responsibility to bring this scholarship to the project in ways that made these questions public and prepared the community to engage with the topic in more sophisticated ways.

During our project, the event that caused the most intrepid anticipation and anxious consternation prior to its performance was the dance. Almost everyone we encountered asked questions about the work, wondering how a dance could be made about the Holocaust. Without being necessarily cognizant of the scholarship, they seemed to echo Langer's warning that "whatever 'beauty' Holocaust art achieves is soiled by the misery of its theme" (1995, p. 8). One project partner was so concerned about a dance representation of the Holocaust, they asked for editorial control before signing on as a partner (Field Notes, 2004).

In American dance history, there are only a few examples of dance involving the Holocaust performed by professional companies. Anna Sokolow's *Dreams* (1961)[2] is generally considered the first exploration of the Holocaust in American dance. Trained under Martha Graham, Sokolow created her own company of "radical dancers" (as the movement was known) to explore issues of social justice including: anti-war, oppression of workers, juvenile delinquency and exile and suffering (Martin, 1939). *Dreams*, inspired by the nightmares experienced as a result of her reading of André Schwartz-Bart's book The Last of the Just, "was not only a terrifying allegory of hopelessness and despair and an abstract exploration of the internal terrors of nightmares, but also a very literal indictment of what had happened to the Jewish people during the Holocaust" (JWA, n.d.).

Heinz Poll, who served in the German Navy during WWII before immigrating to Chile from East Berlin in 1951, created a work on the Holocaust for the Ohio Ballet called *Songs Without Words (*1982). Anna Kisselgoff, critic for the New York Times said of the dance, "It was a surprisingly sensitive reflection on a difficult subject - the murder of millions in Nazi concentration camps" (Kisselgoff, 1982).

Several dance works have been created based on the story of Anne Frank, including works by Adam Darius (1989) and Mauricio Wainrot (1997). Wainrot's version of Anne Frank tours extensively through Florida schools. Carolyn Dorfmann's *Mayne Mentshn (My People)* (2000) contains a section representing the Holocaust from the perspective of a child of survivors. Other than these examples, few choreographers in the U.S. have attempted works based on the Holocaust.

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[2] Video clips and still images from Sokolow's *Dreams* (1961) can be found at <http://www.jwa.org/archive/sokolow/ascl.html>.

Having few examples in the American dance canon to follow, some members of the team examined examples in art, historiography, and memorialization. In memorialization we found the ideas that resonated most profoundly with us. Informed by Young's work in theorizing the counter-monument movement in Holocaust memorialization and the presence of absence in these works, we began to consider the ways in which the construct of the void, or absence, as a site of memory might also contribute to how audiences would respond to the dance *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. James Young described the notion of a void, often occurring in Holocaust memorials, as a site where memory is returned to the people (1993, 2000). By highlighting absence, as designers have done in the creation of anti-monuments beginning in the 1970s, these works distort the positivist notion of "monument" by deconstructing the form to suggest that what is permanent about the monument is in fact the memory—not the object. Young writes, "Rather than creating self-contained sites of memory, detached from our daily lives, these artists would force both visitors and local citizens to look within themselves for memory, at their actions and motives for memory within these spaces" (Young, 2000b).

The counter-monument requires the viewer bring prior understandings to the site. The moment of encounter with the space is amplified by the imagination as it resonates with the contextual knowledge brought to the site of memorialization (or performance). The viewer's understandings are refashioned in the moment. The viewer is asked to consider who is not present. In response, our imaginations begin filling the void. Young suggests this act of imagination is a point of engagement [which] is both personal and collective (2005, Lecture). Might the same be true for this ballet?

Would the use of the body in dance – live, in real time and relation – create a profound reminder of the frailties and responsibilities of the individual in the Shoah? Would stillness create the same process as the counter-monument?

It seemed that with every theoretical move our decisions created a space of possibility for our work, concomitantly revealing spaces of impossibility. The quote that ended Langer's book, and began this paper, could aptly be applied to the problematics in dance:

> Traditionally, ~~teachers~~ [choreographers] open doors of possibility for their ~~students~~ [audiences]. In this one instance, they are obliged to open doors of impossibility, an equally compelling but more arduous task, because the obstacles to gaining entrance are so many, the usual rewards so few. (Langer, 1998, p. 198).

These complexities suggested to us that the dance was a rich source for investigation. Even in the making, the work inspired intense discussion about representation, education, ethics, the Holocaust, and the need for social action. Our project team hoped the presentation of the work would also amplify those discussions.

Chapter Three: Research Methods

This study draws from a variety of research traditions, primarily ethnographic. Mixed methods of analysis seemed most appropriate given the variety of my research questions and the genre differences in the data sources. The study draws from case study (Dyson & Genishi, 2005; Stake, 1994, 2005; Yin, 2003, 2005), embedded case study (Scholz & Tietje, 2002), public ethnography and "the observation of participation" (Tedlock, 2005, p. 467), and for the embedded case of the dance: Creative Analytic Practices ethnography (Richardson, 2000), and dance analysis (Adshead et al, 1988; Briginshaw, 2001; Banes, 1994).

CASE STUDY AND EMBEDDED CASE STUDY

As Stake suggested, "Case study is not a methodological choice but a choice of object to be studied" (Stake, 1994, p. 236). The *Light Project*, with its multiple events, individuals and communities, will constitute the case. Conducting a case study is pertinent when research approaches a descriptive question (what happened?) or an explanatory question (how or why did something happen?) and when you want to collect data in natural settings (Stake, 1994, 2005; Yin, 2003, 2005). As Yin suggested, the "strength of the case study method is its ability to examine, in depth, a 'case' within its 'real-life' context" (2005, p. 380). Further, Stake stated, "the conceptions of most naturalistic, holistic, ethnographic, phenomenological case studies emphasize objective description and personalistic interpretation, a respect and curiosity for culturally different perceptions of phenomena, and empathic representation of local settings – all blending (perhaps clumped) within a constructivist epistemology" (1994, p. 242).

An analysis of the case, the *Light Project*, will help answer the first two research questions I pose:

- How did community leaders envision and enact the community partnership *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?
- In what ways, if any, did the community partnership amplify the artistic, education and civic events of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?

Embedded in that case, the dance work will be analyzed as a sub-unit to answer the question:

- What pedagogical possibilities occur in the dance work *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*?

Thinking of the *Light Project* as a case constituted by embedded cases allows me to look at the project as a whole and focus on a specific instance within the project to investigate the educational possibilities within that "instance". Embedded in the *Light Project*, the ballet serves as a salient sub-unit, a way to investigate the artistic, education and civic implications of a single critical event within the project. Embedded case studies, as outlined by Scholz and Tietje, "allow for a multiplicity of methods that may be applied within the sub-units" (2002, p.10). Clearly, analysis of the dance will require methods that differ from the analysis applied to the broader context of the case. A discussion of the merits of my choice of analytic frameworks appears later in this chapter.

PUBLIC ETHNOGRAPHY AND THE OBSERVATION OF PARTICIPATION

The enactment of and research into the *Light Project* represents public ethnography (Tedlock, 2005). As Tedlock states, "By public ethnography, I mean the type of research and writing that directly engages with the critical social issues of our time… Authors of such work passionately inscribe, translate, and perform their research in order to present it to the general public" (2005, p. 475). As a public ethnographer, I have attempted to create a project that is an "open hermeneutic text that creates spaces for dialogue that blur boundaries among researchers, participants, and audiences, so that, ideally, roles reverse and participants lead researchers to new questions" (Finley, 2005, p. 686). In this way, this study is a political/ethical/pedagogical act, attempting to address a social issue in a way that opens research to others interested in addressing the problem. "This new ethnography is deeply rooted in ideas of kindliness, neighborliness, and a shared moral good. Within this politically engaged environment, social science projects serve the communities in which they are carried out, rather than serving external

communities of educators, policy makers, military personnel, and financiers" (Tedlock, 2005, p. 474).

As an active participant in the construction of the case, I worked as a scholar, artist, educator and community volunteer for social justice within the framework of art-based inquiry (Finley, 2005). As Tedlock suggested, public ethnographers: a) engage in contemporary social issues; b) work to present their understandings to a general public; and c) "use the observations of their own participation to understand and artistically portray the pleasures and sorrows of daily life at home as well as in many out-of-the way places. In so doing, they emotionally engage, educate, and move the public to action" (Tedlock, 2005, p. 473). From this emic stance, Tedlock outlines the ethnographer's shift from participation of observation to "the observation of participation. During this activity, they reflect on their own participation within the ethnographic frame" (Tedlock, 2005, p. 467). Tedlock suggested here a bridging of theory and practice, creating spaces of inquiry that require both action and reflection. Public ethnography situates the researcher as an actor in the community, extending the notion of responsibility beyond the useful and necessary acts of commentary. My interpretations and actions worked to generate the project and perform within it. My work is clearly situated in what Denzin calls the seventh moment of qualitative inquiry, in which "ethnographers… perform culture as they write it" (Denzin, 2003, p.4).

I believe this research position also extends the line of work of the professoriate that Boyer referred to as "scholarship of engagement" (Boyer, 1990, 1996):

> Scholarship of engagement means connecting the rich resources of the university to our most pressing social, civic and ethical problems… Increasingly I'm convinced that ultimately, the scholarship of engagement also means creating a special climate in which the academic and civic culture communicate more continuously and more creatively with each other… Scholarship has to prove its

> worth not on its own terms, but by service to the nation and the world (Boyer, 1996)

Vortuba builds an argument, in ethnographic and educational terms, for this process of engagement:

> The scholarship of engagement requires more than subject area competence. [Scholars of engagement] must be sensitive to local cultures and values. They must have the ability to speak in terms that the public can understand. They must know how to establish and sustain trust. Most importantly, they must understand that, when they engage in community-based collaboration, they do so as both a teacher and learner with the community playing both roles as well. It is this willingness on the part of both faculty and the community to be both teacher and learner that is the foundation on which the partnerships are built (2000, p. 119).

Through my work in the *Light Project*, I attempted to engage in research while in service to the community, directly addressing reciprocity as an ethical stance. Attempting to create research opportunities through service, the researcher brings a valuable expertise and resources to the development of projects like the *Light Project*. In this way, the researcher creates a reciprocal relationship based in equities of contributions. I have spent the last two years envisioning and enacting the *Light Project*, frequently talking about it in professional, religious and civic meetings, including reflection as a formal part of my work. I continue to work with the project and activities that grew from the effort as the partnerships evolve.

The iterative process of the project, and the ways in which it continues to be a part of my research and social life, encouraged me to utilize Richardson's (2000) practice of Creative Analytic Practices ethnography to analyze and write about the educational possibilities of the dance. Creative Analytic Practices ethnography is characterized by a: "substantive contribution to an understanding of social life; aesthetic merit; reflexivity;

emotional and intellectual impact; and a clear expression of a cultural, social, individual, or communal sense of reality" (Richardson, 2000, p. 937).

DATA COLLECTION

Data Collection for the Case of the *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*

Documentation of the *Light Project* exists in textual, visual, and audio format. In our roles as researchers on the project, members of our project team began from the first moments in our initial meetings to document all proceedings, collecting multiple sources of evidence for use in triangulating our evidence and to "establish converging lines of evidence" (Yin, 2005. p. 386) to construct findings as robust as possible. Meeting minutes, notes, and audio and videotapes were collected. We kept records of email communication that occurred throughout the project. Our project team hired professional videographers and photographers to document each of the events. Records were kept of all media coverage. Members of our team conducted interviews with teacher participants at the professional development institute, comments were elicited (and videotaped) from audience members at numerous events, and formal interviews were conducted at the conclusion of the project with each of the partners and a number of artists who were involved in the project. The following individuals participated in the videotaped formal interviews:

Will Wynn

Tom Meredith

Pat Forgione

Judy Yudof

Stephen Mills

Cookie Ruiz

Mary Lee Webeck

Kirk Rudy

Amy Rudy

Brent Hasty

Steve Adler

Allison Paino

Tony Casati

These artifacts exist as historical source material to build the case.

In addition to these historical documents, I conducted an additional series of semi-structured interviews with the leadership team of the project including Cookie Ruiz, Mary Lee Webeck, and Stephen Mills. The semi-structured interviews followed these general lines of questioning:

a) Motivations for participation
b) Experiences within the project
c) Views of Holocaust education
d) Implications of the project for social change

Data Collection for the Analysis of the Dance

A videotape of the dance work, taped during a performance, was used to analyze the dance. Additional interpretive data was collected during interviews with the choreographer, Stephen Mills.

DATA SOURCES

The data sources investigated in this study include both historical documents collected during the *Light Project* and new data collected during the current research phase of the project. The new data sources include interview transcripts and other sources that were recommended or revealed during the investigation.

Documents:

Planning materials

Fund raising materials

Grant applications

Marketing and public relations materials

Educational materials

Performance materials

Production designs

Photographic documentation

Lecture materials

Meeting Agendas, Notes and Minutes

Press and reviews

Field notes

Interview transcripts

Video:

Semi-structured interviews with leadership team

Video interviews taped during the project documentation phase from project leaders, choreographer, designers, and dancers

Videotape of project components including the professional development institute, lectures, Co-existence exhibit, Light Performance, and community dialogues

Correspondence:

Email correspondence among leadership team

Dance/image data:

Videotape of the performance

DATA ANALYSIS

Analysis of the Case

According to Stake, "Case study facilitates the conveying of the experience of actors and stakeholders as well as the experience of studying the case… It does so largely with narratives and situational description of case activity, personal relationship, and group interpretation" (2005, p. 454). My analysis of the multiple sources of data from the case involved pattern identification, supported through triangulation. I structured the case study around a combination of these patterns and categories of events that occurred within the project.

Credibility (Guba & Lincoln, 1989) tests for the study will focus on persistent observation, peer debriefing, progressive subjectivity, member checks and triangulation. Dependability and confirmability audits will be documented and made transparent in the writing by creating what Yin calls "a clear trail of evidence" (Yin, 2005). The research will be based in critical reflexivity (Mertens, 2005) and reciprocity. I hope the work will be judged by its catalytic authenticity, described by Mertens (2005) as "the extent to which action is stimulated by the inquiry process" (p. 258). The goal of this community

project was to effect social change. As a public ethnographer, I share this same goal for the research on the project, to catalyze change. This case outlines the perceived changes, the resulted from the *Light Project*.

This study of a collaborative project offers an exemplar, both descriptive and heuristic, of a community response to a particular educational aim: Holocaust education. I try to reflect that community stance in the design of the project, the opportunities for analysis and the style of writing in this text. My writing style includes multiple voices. I incorporate video and photo stills to communicate my understanding to a variety of audiences with varying levels of experience in each of the disciplinary realms situating the project.

Analysis of the Dance

Live performance differs from dance video. Like many performance arts, documentations and notations often diminish the emotional power of the original work. Dance videos are often criticized for their inability to maintain the original quality of the movement (Brennan, 1999). Similarly text-based descriptions of dance face many challenges of representation. "That dance cannot be frozen, held, stilled is its very essence. Dance writers are thus, even more than literary scholars, always confronted with great difficulty of reducing the realities of motion to verbal formulas" (Goellner & Murphy, 1995, p. 5). I include photo stills to capture moments of time and moments of the dance.

In looking for analytical frames I explored methods of movement analysis and dance criticism. I rejected the forms of Laban Movement Analysis, not only because Laban worked for the Nazi party assigned to create a German National dance aesthetic before defecting to England, but rather because LMA centers on the experience of the

performers. In this study, I am more interested in the interpretive experience of the members of the audience.

Adshead, Briginshaw, Hodgens and Huxley (1988) constructed an elaborate 4-stage framework for dance analysis that considers the works: components, form, interpretation and evaluation. In a feat of technical rationality, they created a tool that extends this structure to achieve what they call a "skillful probing" of dance (Adshead et al, 1988, pp. 118 - 121).

1. Components
    - 1.1. Movement
        - 1.1.1. Spatial elements
            - 1.1.1.1. Shape
            - 1.1.1.2. Size
            - 1.1.1.3. Pattern/line
            - 1.1.1.4. Direction/ Level
            - 1.1.1.5. Location in performance space
        - 1.1.2. Dynamic elements
            - 1.1.2.1. Tension/force, strength/lightness
            - 1.1.2.2. Speed/ tempo
            - 1.1.2.3. Duration
            - 1.1.2.4. Rhythm
        - 1.1.3. Clusters of movement elements
    - 1.2. Dancers
        - 1.2.1. Number and sex
        - 1.2.2. Role
        - 1.2.3. Clusters of elements concerned with dancers
    - 1.3. Visual setting/ environment
        - 1.3.1. Performance area, set/ surroundings
        - 1.3.2. Lighting
        - 1.3.3. Costumes and props
        - 1.3.4. Video projections (added)
        - 1.3.5. Projected text (added)
        - 1.3.6. Cluster of visual elements
    - 1.4. Aural elements
        - 1.4.1. Sound
        - 1.4.2. Spoken word

1.4.3. Music
1.4.4. Clusters of aural elements
1.5. Complexes of component elements

2. Form
2.1. Relations according to components
2.1.1. Relations between spatial and dynamic elements
2.1.2. Relations between dancers in number, sex and role
2.1.3. Relations between visual setting/ environment
2.1.4. Relations between aural elements
2.1.5. Relations between complexes
2.2. Relations at a point in time
2.2.1. Simple/ complex
2.2.2. Likenesses/ commonalities
2.2.3. Differences/ opposition
2.3. Relations through time
2.3.1. Exact repetition/ recurrence
2.3.2. Alteration of one or more components
2.3.3. Addition or subtraction of one or more components
2.3.4. Alteration of the order of events
2.4. Relations between moment and the linear development
2.5. Major/ minor/ subsidiary relations
2.5.1. Complexes, strands, units, phrases and sections in relation to each other
2.5.2. Complexes, strands, units, phrases and sections in relation to the total dance form
2.5.3. Total web of relations

3. Interpretation
3.1. Concepts through which interpretations are made
3.1.1. Socio- cultural background
3.1.2. Content
3.1.3. Genre
3.1.3.1. Style of the dance
3.1.4. Subject matter
3.2. Concepts relating to the interpretation of a specific dance
3.2.1. Character
3.2.2. Qualities
3.2.3. Meanings/significance

4. Evaluation
4.1. Concepts through which evaluations are made
4.1.1. The general values of the society and culture
4.1.2. The specific values embodied in the context in which dances appear
4.1.3. The particular values associated with different genres and styles

4.1.4. Subject matter
4.1.4.1. Appropriateness of the range of subject matter
4.1.4.2. Appropriateness of the range of treatment of the subject matter
4.2. Concepts relating to the evaluation of a specific dance
4.2.1. Worth and merit of the dance
4.2.1.1. Effectiveness and appropriateness of the choreography
4.2.1.2. Effectiveness and appropriateness of the performance

Post-modern interpreters criticize this formal examination as limiting the affective response derived from the aesthetic experience. Marsha Seigal (1998) suggests a much broader reading by attending to lexicon, beat/rhythm, orchestration (conceived broadly as compositional construction of the dance work), structural elements and the performance practice. Dance critic Sally Banes outlines a useful frame for organizing writing about movement performance, drawing from a long history of arts criticism. Banes suggests dance criticism include description, interpretation, evaluation, and contextual explanation, a framework she modified from earlier work of Denby, who modified the work of Goethe (Banes, 1994). This basic structure of critical analysis is echoed throughout the literature of dance criticism (and art criticism and theater criticism).

I will draw from these three analytic methods in order to construct a thorough analysis of the dance work. My analysis of the dance builds on the ideas of performance ethnography. My analysis will make sense of the dance and explore the pedagogical possibilities of the dance for Holocaust education.

Initial interpretations of the work, expressed by audience members during the production, were complex, intertextual, and resonant. This suggests rich pedagogical possibilities for using the dance for educative purposes in Holocaust education. I hope the explication of the case of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*, coupled with the analysis of the dance, will help us understand more fully the ways in which one arts

partnerships attempted to amplify understanding of the Holocaust through art, education and civic dialogue.

Chapter Four: Envisioning *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*

Illustration 6: The *Light Project* banner listing events and partners on display at the Coexistence Exhibit. Photograph by author.

COMING TOGETHER FOR THE DEEP POLITIC

The *Light Project*, from its inception, carried an aura of risky ambition. Through the stages of the project a sense of meaningfulness and energy compelled the project onward – from an intriguing idea, in a growing social network with a constellation of motivations, through an ambitiously transdisciplinary design with intentions of creating a climate for deep political change. The idea was big, and people wanted to know how we were going to do it. The project had a tight timeline, and people wanted to know how we were going to do it. The idea was unique, and people wanted to know how we were going to do it. But despite the common sense of "how-are-you-going-to-do-it-ness", people

(almost) always encouraged the idea. It provoked curiosity. It provoked a strange sense of audacious potential.

This perception of possibility seemed at its core a political possibility. As Amy Rudy, a project leader expressed, "I am overwhelmed at the power and beauty of this project to make a difference and embrace the opportunity to speak to our community about our prejudices, our discomfort, our compassion, and our accountability" (Personal communication, January 2005). Her response teems with a hopeful agitation that welcomes the uncomfortable possibility of making a difference through social action in ordinary, but troubled, times. It suggests a desire to move beyond our everyday relationship into a deeper relationship.

I see now that the sense of audaciousness was rooted in the project's promise of a deep politic. Deep political actions "challenge the status quo… trying to consider issues of representation as they relate to a change process that addresses social inequities" (Gitlin, 2005, p. 22). The people creating this project were attempting to challenge the status quo in education, in art, in Holocaust education, in civic participation and in the dynamic relationships between these fields. Every "how are you going to do it" question evidenced a challenge to the status quo. When a dance patron asked, "How are you going to do a ballet about the Holocaust?" the project challenged the status quo conception of the possibility of dance. When an educator asked, "How are you going to get schools to attend these events?" the project challenged the status quo of education. When a researcher asked, "How are you going to study it?" it challenged the status quo of how research is conducted and understood. These audacious moves, filled with risk and potential, inspired people to join the partnership. The potentials of the project provided a space for people to imagine a world changed by the deep politic.

Hope of Transformational Change

People engage in the deep politic when they take action to create a more just world as a result of their examinations of the everyday intersections of power, representation and identity. The *Light Project* seemed to offer a possibility for the deep politic.

Will Wynn, Austin's mayor, confessed that while Austin considers itself "quite progressive and tolerant… in hindsight the last couple of years, we've seen some chinks in that armor" (Interview, May 6, 2005). The combination of *Light Project* activities exploring the ideas of coexistence, he said, "struck me as being exactly what Austin needed at the time" (Interview, May 6, 2005). The city had recently suffered a series of painful self-realizations. During this period, a police officer remained on suspension during the investigation of the shooting of a Latino teenager. The police officer suggested self-defense during an attempted drug bust. Others suggested the killing was racially motivated. Two officers were reprimanded for typing "burn, baby burn" over their police car messaging network while responding to a fire reported at a nightclub with predominantly African American clientele. The police offers suggested the comment was motivated by excessive number of incidents they had responded to at this location. Other suggested it was racially motivated. These high profile news events didn't overshadow the growing frustration with perceived and actual inequities of services and consideration provided by the city to neighborhoods primarily populated by African American and Hispanic communities. Most people agreed there was a serious problem; there did not exist a serious plan to solve it. The focus remained on the isolated incidents, rather than addressing underlying causes or creating a mechanism for more adequate representation than our current governmental structure was providing. For the Mayor, the combination

of public art and public dialogue components amplified his charge for creating a more just community. By engaging in conversations about the nature of tolerance and coexistence, might we find ways to achieve it as a city? Rich Oppel, the editor of the *Austin American Statesman*, encouraged the Mayor's hope of engaging community dialogue during times of relative calm, outside the context of a particular incident (March 10, 2005).

The Austin Independent School District Superintendent of Schools framed the possibilities of the project in terms of his responsibility, public education:

> This project had a sense of purpose… that we must build a set of values that will sustain our community as a community of respect, of caring of honesty… When I saw the list of events: the lectures, the artistic event, the production, the speakers, it said to me, this is an educational activity. They're educating our community. I wanted to be at the table to help them, if I could provide that help (Interview, May 7, 2005).

His desire "to build a set of values that will sustain our community" suggests he held a conception for the project as an act of the deep politic. The educational nature of the activities aligned with his identification as head of schools, but the outcome was pointedly political. His suggestion that the activities were "educating our community" suggested the project offered him an opportunity to move educational opportunities outside the classroom, and outside the school day. In a sense, this move disrupts the status quo, by calling into question where education happens, when education happens and who delivers the instruction and how.

Tony Casati, a dancer, framed the project in terms of the choices of the everyday that might have deep political ramifications:

> The goal as I see it is to ask people to question themselves, their own tolerance and intolerance in the world and to maybe make other choices about it. So when

> they're confronted with hate to consider it in a different way; to make another choice – that moment – to go down a different road (Interview May 1, 2005).

Perhaps his role as an actor in the dance forwarded this individual lens, rather than the positional lens of the organizational leaders, but the deep politic remains resolute in his call to action. Will Meinecke, Historian at the United States Historical Memorial Museum and an Instructor at the Professional Development Institute for Teachers, suggested the *Light Project* was "trying to mobilize public consciousness about what they can do to effect change" (Interview February, 2005). Indeed, this call to take action was echoed by Mills in a newspaper interview about the *Light Project*:

> Art can't change the word. But art can change people and people change the world. It can give them insight into something else. The most rewarding thing for me would be if this ballet would make people realize that political apathy – apathy of any kind – is unacceptable. Inspiring others to act would be the most important thing I could hope for as an artist (Van Reizen, 2005)

The *Light Project* offered a kind of hopeful possibility for an examination of everyday actions that might lead to transformational social change from very personal perspectives. The intensity of the personal perspective in fact proved problematic.

Not everyone saw the *Light Project* with such hopeful possibility. The suspicions regarding race, sexual orientation and class lingered throughout the project. One university colleague recommended we remove the Holocaust elements of the project, at least diminish their centrality, to make the issue more "relevant to other communities" (Personal communication, January 2005). The perception of the Holocaust as a Jewish interest/issue, subsequently not an interest/issue to another group, expressed a sentiment we encountered with surprising regularity. In addition to the content, the form of some activities is perceived to reinforce status quo power inequities:

> In a lengthy conversation with someone who was in attendance on Sunday and spoke on the depth of the issue of racism in Austin... I was struck once again by the unfathomable depth of the anger/pain relating to this discussion. The only tiny bit of consensus that we could reach together after over an hour of taking baby steps toward next steps in the community dialog is that the focus needs to be on personal responsibility for how we treat one another. This person feels that forums such as this one are "set ups" where the minorities are always out numbered (Ruiz, personal communication, March 9, 2005).

Gitlin's deep politic encouraged us to look at the unexamined form of convening as potent sources for productively disruptive behavior and to take responsibility for reinscribing the power inequities. We hadn't considered it… the classic definition of the power of privilege. However, the realization incited much reflection. Mary Lee Webeck offered this response:

> In terms of the conversation you mention, Cookie, I did not have it, but have had others like it in the past, and have been thinking a lot about next steps. I have asked Angela for some readings that might help us (or me at least) to revisit the idea of white privilege to help us work toward some framework that could be useful here. I am several years behind in academic reading on this subject, and there may be some kernels there.
>
> In many respects the idea of personal responsibility is the only one we can really work towards, but if a number of people begin to take personal responsibility, that drives civil and civic change. I think this is what we are already doing. I suppose we must ask--is this enough?
>
> The layers of pain around issues of race and sexuality are so deeply personal. I have also been thinking a lot about something that Brent and I have spoken about at considerable length. In the community of survivors of the Holocaust, there are those that speak to others about their experiences--and those that choose not to. Very often, the message of those who speak is that of seeking ways to forgive and ways to understand, ways to move forward. Some express anger, many express confusion, still. I have been wondering so much about the voices of those who cannot, or choose not to speak to us, and what they would say. Might they consider people who had not suffered the Holocaust to have certain "privilege," comparable to white privilege? Might they consider that it does no good talking to such folks?

> I have been wondering if there is a possible connection to the issues of discussion of race, somewhere here in this tangled past.
>
> Then, the next question becomes what to do about this. Sorry to ramble on. . .
>
> (Webeck, Personal communication, March 10, 2005).

Our project leadership team took seriously the personal demands of the project, not just the implementation, but also through self-reflection. The combination of lofty project goals and its transdiciplinary nature provided the space for a wide range of personal inquiries. The transdisciplinary nature allowed individuals to think about how their efforts in the project might alter their discipline(s) or the practice of their field(s). In this way, the enactment of the project formed a kind of public scholarship. Our personal inquiries were enacted in public space. Our reflections and analysis of the inquiry informed the enactment of the project. We represented the understandings that resulted from this inquiry in the formal ways of our fields, such as academic papers, artistic representations, grants and funding proposals; and in informal ways: speaking out in meetings, implementing project design changes, and engaging in dialogues across the communities in which we circulated.

Meet The Players

Brent Hasty

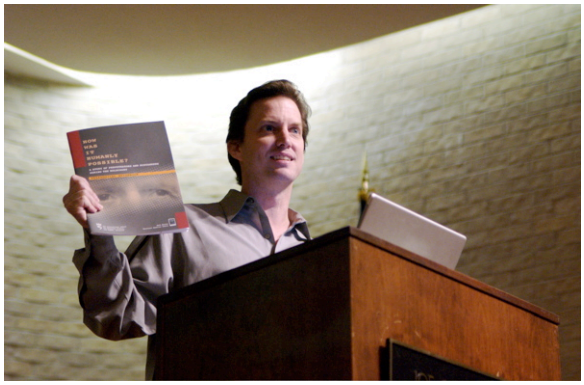

Illustration 7: Brent Hasty at lecture series. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

My biographical sketch reads: Brent Hasty consults with arts organizations and school districts as they work to integrate community arts and cultural resources into the classroom. His current clients include Dallas Arts Partners, a collaborative project among the city of Dallas, DISD and 62 arts and cultural organizations and the national network of Young Audiences, Inc. Brent is a former high school teacher and Program Director of Young Audiences of Greater Dallas, where he was awarded National Staff Member of the Year Award for his work in Professional Development for artists and teachers. He continues to design and implement Professional Development workshops for artists and teachers in the integration of the arts in classroom instruction throughout the country. He is past chairman of the Education Peer Review Panel for the Texas Commission on the Arts and has served three terms as a funding panelist for the J. F. Kennedy Center Alliance for Arts in Education Network in Washington, D.C. Brent is currently a doctoral candidate at The University of Texas at Austin in Curriculum Studies where he serves as

an Assistant Instructor for Elementary Social Studies Methods courses in the teacher preparation program. Brent lives with his partner, Stephen Mills and actively volunteers with Ballet Austin.

Mary Lee Webeck

Illustration 8: Dr. Mary Lee Webeck. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Mary Lee Webeck is an Assistant Professor of Curriculum and Instruction in the College of Education at The University of Texas at Austin. Dr. Mary Lee Webeck received her Ph.D. from Purdue University in 2001. She is a National Board Certified Teacher having written curriculum for gifted and talented inclusion, Holocaust education, and civic education. Dr. Webeck currently serves on the NCSS Research Committee and as a member of the Editorial Board for Social Studies and the Young Learner. As a public school teacher she won numerous teaching awards, including Indiana Social Studies Teacher of the Year, and Law Related Education Teacher of the Year. She received the prestigious Milken Educator Award in 2000. Dr. Webeck has worked closely with the Center for Civic Education, the Texas State Bar, and the Houston Holocaust Museum in creating and administering professional development opportunities for social studies teachers. She is a Faculty Fellow for the Warren Family Fellows at the Holocaust

Museum Houston and was a member of the Jack and Anita Hess Seminar at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in 2004. Dr. Webeck serves as Chair of the Dissertation Committee for Brent Hasty.

Webeck became involved with the *Light Project* at its inception. She is often described as the heart of the *Light Project*, attending to the civic qualities of engagement.

Stephen Mills

Illustration 9: Stephen Mills. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Stephen Mills is Artistic Director of Ballet Austin. His professional biography credits his artistic leadership for the increased international recognition of Ballet Austin. Under his direction the company has performed in France, Italy and Slovenia as well as the Joyce theater in New York and the John F. Kennedy Center for the Performing Arts in Washington D.C. His work has been called sleek and sophisticated. In 1998, Mills was the only American choreographer to win a prize at the Rencontres Choregraphiques

Internationales de Saint-Seine-Denis in Paris, France. Mills recently served as a trustee on the Board of Directors for Dance/USA. Mills lives with his partner, Brent Hasty.

Cookie Ruiz

Illustration 10: Cookie Ruiz. Photograph by Ballet Austin.

Cookie Ruiz is Executive Director of Ballet Austin. Her resume lists 20 years experience in the areas of strategic planning, program development and non-profit fund-raising/management. Ruiz's honors include Austin Business Journal's "2005 Profiles in Power" award, the American Red Cross "Clara Barton Medal of Honor," Volunteer of the Year for the Austin Independent School District, the Lone Star Girl Scout Council "Women of Distinction" award, and she is a former President of the Junior League of Austin. Ms. Ruiz is currently the Chair of the national Board of Trustees of Dance/USA, the Chair of the "Create Austin" cultural planning process. She is a member of the national Board of Directors of the American Arts Alliance (Washington DC), the Association of Fundraising Professionals (AFP), the Austin Convention & Visitors Bureau, the Board of Directors of GENAustin, the Board of Directors of KMFA, the Board of Governors of KVUE's "5 Kids Who Care" awards program, the Advisory Council of the Center for Community Based & Nonprofit Organizations at Austin Community College and is a community advisor to the Young Women's Alliance

(YWA). Ruiz practices a servant leadership philosophy of leadership and promotes purposeful philanthropy strategies.

Naomi Warren

Illustration 11: Naomi Warren. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Naomi Warren is a Houston community leader, retired business executive and a survivor of three Nazi concentration camps. Warren serves on the Board of Directors of Holocaust Museum Houston and is responsible for the creation of the first fellowship for pre-service teachers in the US, held at the Holocaust Museum Houston. During the war, Naomi survived imprisonment in Auschwitz, Bergen-Belsen and Ravensbruck Concentration Camps. She generously shares her testimony of those times with the Warren Fellows and with the artists of Ballet Austin.

Kirk and Amy Rudy

Illustration 12: Kirk and Amy Rudy. Photograph by Ballet Austin.

Kirk and Amy Rudy are business leaders and community volunteers in Austin. Kirk is a Founding Principal of Endeavor Real Estate Group, specializing the development of retail and office acquisitions. Kirk has served as the President of the Real Estate Council of Austin (RECA) and Vice President of the Board of Directors of the Jewish Community Center of Austin. He has also served as a Director on the boards of the RECA Good Government PAC, the RECA Business Issues PAC, Hill Country Conservancy, Vision 2010, and Central Texas Regional Planning Process.

Amy Rudy, who ran a successful business development software company called ModelOffice, now devotes her time to her children and the community. She serves on the Executive Committee for Ballet Austin and serves on a variety of committees for organizations across the arts and social services in Austin.

Tom Meredith

Illustration 13: Tom Meredith. Photograph courtesy of MFI Capital.

Thomas J. Meredith's biography describes him an active private investor, civic leader, and philanthropist. He is currently the chief executive officer of MFI Capital, a private investment firm. Meredith served as chief financial officer for Dell Inc. and is given credit for improving Dell's direct business model. Meredith serves on the advisory boards of the Wharton School at the University of Pennsylvania and McCombs Business School at The University of Texas at Austin. Meredith currently serves as chair and president of the Meredith Private Foundation, a family foundation focusing on enhancing the lives of children.

Personal Inquiry Made Public: A Closer Look At Three Motivations

In preparation for our opening press conference, Cookie Ruiz suggested members of the leadership team write a few words describing why we became involved in the project to provide source material for the PR firm to distribute to the press, should they be asked for quotes (January 6, 2005). Mary Lee, Amy Rudy and I responded. I include the full texts of our responses, despite their length, in order to illustrate the constellation of motivations for each individual. The motivations voiced in the text reveal a variety of personal, professional, associative and civic subjectivities.

I begin with my response:

> January 18, 2005
>
> In this historic moment, each of us must act to promote tolerance and the protection of human dignity. I am involved in Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project in hopes that a study of Holocaust history and representation will support our community in committing to these goals. By discussing the series of choices made during the Nazi regime, I hope we reflect on our own choices. While it is impossible to compare the extreme experiences of suffering of Holocaust victims with other experiences, we are not immune to the impulses, as victims, perpetrators or bystanders, that lead to those atrocities. When our response to genocide happening across the world stops at a disgustful shaking of the head; when our response to hate crimes stops at sadness; when our response to governmental policies that deny equal rights to gays and lesbians, or any group, can be explained away through substitutions; when our response to bigoted language is silence; when our response to people of a different race, gender, orientation, class or ability is based on their being in that group, not as individuals; when any of these exist in our society, or the others too numerous to list, we must all commit to taking action. Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project lets us take action together.
>
> For individual participants, I hope Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project will inspire actions that promote tolerance.

For the University, I hope that Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project inspires a Center for Holocaust Education that prepares all teachers to effectively teach the Holocaust.

For Ballet Austin, I hope Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project becomes a way to become even more involved in education by creating a show that can perform every April in the new Dance Education Center.

For community arts and cultural organization, I hope Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project promotes continued collaboration to impact social change.

For the schools, I hope Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project will demonstrate the ways in which conversations begun in classrooms can be supported in families and in communities.

For teachers, I hope Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project will provide support to teach the Holocaust thoughtfully, accurately and with passion brought by aesthetic engagement.

For students, I hope Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project will teach that the Holocaust was not inevitable but brought about by a series of choices; choices they experience in small ways everyday.

For me, I hope Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project makes our world a little less hurtful to people who have been marginalized in our society.

Brent Hasty

In asking "what this project means to you," Cookie opened a space for an outpouring of hopes for the project (Ruiz, personal communication, January 6, 2005). I forwarded hopes across fields. I expressed hopes for Holocaust education, in the formation of a Center for Holocaust Education and in more wise practice in the teaching and learning of the subject. I expressed a hope for arts organizations role in the community becoming more central in both community and educational practices. I expressed a hope for the individual facing marginalization or intolerance. Each of these hopes formed a constellation of motivations that guided my work in the project. Some of

these remain central to my work, some diminished and more were added as I continued to learn through the enactment of the project.

Amy Rudy offered the following:

> January 10, 2005
>
> Here goes...
>
> I have been searching for and discovering my own definitions of inclusion vs. exclusion. I have experienced and practiced both. I grew up outside of Washington, DC, with the support of a beautiful and inclusive Anglo Christian church. Growing up, I had Jewish friends and some exposure to the Holocaust.
>
> I lead a charmed life, but have taken my turn at being labeled, on occasion, for beliefs, questions, statements, incidents, rumors, habits, associations, etc. (Not my sport, but, I confess, I dabbled in these games myself). However, all of these knicks at my character have been tempered by genuine friendships and the knowledge that I am basically safe.
>
> I married a Jewish man who shares with me his 3 Jewish children. Together, we have a Jewish daughter. I have never felt fear from being who I am. Now, I have an ongoing gnawing fear for our 4 children. Sadly, I believe we live in a world that may not always include them in the same safety net that I have always assumed for myself.
>
> There are others...
>
> I worry about the child who doesn't quite fit in. I ache for the 10 year old who gets bullied and no one objects. I am angry about the gay high school student who feels his only escape from ridicule is suicide.
>
> The majority must be held accountable for these individuals.
>
> I love being part of Ballet Austin. I am overwhelmed at the power and beauty of this project to make a difference and embrace the opportunity to speak to our community about our prejudices, our discomfort, our compassion, and our accountability.
>
> I believe we all need to practice acceptance and strive toward inclusion. Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project is a wonderful exercise for our family

> to become more disciplined in living up to our expectations, for ourselves and for others.
>
> ...I tried hard to edit this down - this is a fraction of what I feel for this project and our potential to impact like-minded as well as the un-enlightened.
>
> Anyway, thank you to all of you for bringing life to this project. It means a great deal to me to get to associate myself with such an amazing team of people.
>
> Amy Rudy

She articulates various subject positions as a wife, a mother, and a Christian who converted to Judaism when she married her husband. She forwards her work in this project as a family endeavor, not only in intensely personal terms of safety for her children, but as a way in which her family might engage with the world. While she says she loves Ballet Austin, she does not explicit call out her role as a board member. She implies her direct affiliation with this group when she suggests the project provides her with an "opportunity to speak with our community." She suggests a kind of civic engagement that is amplified as she describes notions of responsibility, accountability and association throughout the document. Her highly personal response provided me with insight into her intense participation with particular aspects of the project. I began to see more clearly why she volunteered to organize the free family celebration that coincided with the Coexistence art opening.

Mary Lee offered the following response:

> January 22, 2005
>
> My involvement in *Light / The Holocaust and Humanity Project* allows me to practice publicly what I believe is possible—and necessary—in communities and educative experiences. I yearn for students to be challenged by rich and involved interactions with the important ideas of disciplines that include but extend beyond basic skills in reading and mathematics. I know that learners are capable of handling complexity—when given the opportunity to do so —and I recognize that

the ability to handle complexity must be developed. I know that people are creative and capable of great imaginative endeavor and that communities are enriched by the ongoing support of creative acts. I know that the ability to create is nourished by context, immersion, and resources. I know that the ability to communicate is learned, and that the ability to communicate when emotion or conflict are involved becomes more difficult. If opportunities to grapple with intricacies and dilemmas are not present in educative experiences, learning can become dull and disconnected. If we don't learn to talk to each other about difficult problems, the problems are going to become even more difficult to discuss. Citizens may lose the elemental sense of inquiry that is essential in a democratic society. People may lack the ability to talk with reason and respect, acts necessary in a conversational dialogue; acts necessary in a civil society. If we don't see (or perceive) beauty around us, we lose a part of our humanity. We need hope and we need inspiration.

Light / The Holocaust and Humanity Project is based in public institutions, fostered by individuals, and supported by a wide base of our community. This project is at its heart complex, not simply because of its collaborative structure, but because the project resides around our desire to explicate the Holocaust's resonance in our contemporary world and to create a programmatic model that will allow Austin to start a dialogue about this resonance. Some scholars have suggested that the Holocaust is inexplicable. Instead I would suggest that the Holocaust was a series of choices made by individuals who understood that they were correct in their actions. It is important to see how this is possible. What conditions made the teaching of racist ideology an accepted part of a sophisticated culture? Why was increasing degradation of political thinkers, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, the Roma, people with disabilities, and people of the Jewish faith and culture widely supported and increasingly horrific? The answers to these questions are more horrifying than inexplicable. And this is why I believe we must continue in 2005 to grapple, as people and as communities, with the events and actions and repercussions of the Holocaust.

Therefore, my work in this project is a response to what I see happening in my society. When ghettos of economic and racial disparity exist as commonalities, when educational inequity, political intolerance, marginalization of groups in our contemporary world, poor medical care, and institutionalized joblessness and homelessness are aspects of contemporary life that most people acknowledge but do not act upon from positions of comfort and authority, and when young people are brutalized on school buses and in schools, I know my society must examine itself. Such examination must start with individuals and be personal and intense. This project brings together elements of the human experience that center my

work. It provides me an opportunity to work with teachers and community members to create models for change and possibility. It allows me to work toward the idea of all learners becoming involved in the study of important world and human events. I believe that people of all ages who become involved in Light / The Holocaust and Humanity Project will be offered the opportunity for introspection, aesthetic immersion, and finally they may be called to act, in ways magnificent or minute.

Mary Lee Webeck

Mary Lee weaves themes of Holocaust education; education more broadly conceived; aesthetics and art; and citizenship and civic engagement, together in her response. She brings her wide-ranging professional and personal concerns together here to form a constellation that aligns with the projects intentions. She contextualizes the problems within the historic frame of the Holocaust and contrasts them within a contemporary frame:

> When ghettos of economic and racial disparity exist as commonalities, when educational inequity, political intolerance, marginalization of groups in our contemporary world, poor medical care, and institutionalized joblessness and homelessness are aspects of contemporary life that most people acknowledge but do not act upon from positions of comfort and authority, and when young people are brutalized on school buses and in schools, I know my society must examine itself. Such examination must start with individuals (Personal communication, 2005).

In a rhetorical move, Webeck employs language frequently used in the Holocaust literature like “ghetto”, “marginalization” and “institutionalization” to describe these contemporary injustices. This subtlety reveals her position as a Holocaust scholar and a Hess Fellow.

Reading these statements outlining what the project means to these individuals, reveals much about the role of personal subjectivities in the enactment of partnerships. In each statement, the writer reveals aspects of their identities in their hope for the project.

Subsequently, these subjectivities are revealed in the enactment of the project through the ideas and energy they contribute to the partnership.

Resonance Of Personal Histories In The Creation Of Light

The possibility for change, personal or political, resonates with people. The *Light Project* shared that resonant quality. Conle describes the way in which a resonant story "calls forth another in an echo-like fashion… out of a previous context and… into a new one" (1996, p. 301). The project implementation called upon people to reference their past experiences and expertise, often placing new demands in the projects transdisciplinary context.

A similar resonant phenomenon occurred in the stories of the beginning of the project. As each person tells the story of the creation of the project, they call forth past experiences and interests, reframed by this context. Each author recounts a series of experiences happening in different moments throughout their lives that brought them to this moment the project began, as if the story contained multiple chapters. Rather than a single consistent narrative tale, the stories of "the beginnings" read more like a series of stories for each individual. Each segment contains a beginning, middle and an end, moving in time from their youth to the recent past to an immediate precipitating event, like a serial novel. Like serial stories, the compounding effect of the experiences is important. Examining these creation stories illustrates the ways in which projects emerge as both a convergence and a compounding of experience and aspiration. The stories again reveal personal, professional, associative and civic subjectivities that converge to create the teller's version of the beginning of the project that are both similar and different to the other tellers.

Brent's Creation Story

For me, the project began in early winter evening in 2001 in our kitchen. Stephen and I work cooking and talking, it's difficult to remember the specifics of the conversation beyond a general discussion of upcoming ballet programming. These kinds of talks are common in our house. Stephen asks what I think about this idea or that idea. This night, he pitched an idea about the Holocaust. We had been attempting to get a copy of our friend Herb's testimony as a liberator of the camps from the archives of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum. I offered that it would be interesting to research his testimony and others from the archive in order to construct a plot.

My undergraduate degree in theater at Northwestern included intensive work in performance studies. The program focused on the performance of non-traditional performance texts. Much of the work I made during my career in the theater focused on this process. While teaching at Performing Arts High School, I encouraged my advanced students to explore the connections between text structure and theatrical forms, and written imagery and performed imagery. Imagining the performative possibilities contained with the treasury of liberator testimony collected at the USHMM made my heart race.

This conversation excited me, not only because I find the source material interesting, but I also felt an obligation to Herb and his wife Frieda. Herb and Frieda Bitter are the parents of our friend Rena. Rena had recently visited our home for a week and was much on my mind. When I lived in Dallas I spent a lot of time with the Bitter family. They adopted Stephen in the same way they adopted me into the rhythm of their family gatherings. Herb passed away a year before Frieda, but to my mind they passed together. They had that kind of relationship, even their jokes were coordinated. After

Frieda passed away, the family gave me some money to "do some good." I never felt like I met that obligation. This conversation promised me that opportunity.

The conversation became more specific a few weeks later when Stephen began talking about a particularly beautiful Gorecki symphony, his No. 3, the "Symphony of Sorrowful Songs" (Gorecki, 1976). For Stephen the conception of choreography, almost always, begins with the music. He began describing to me this piece of music he wanted to use to set a new work.[3] The Gorecki work is often associated with Holocaust themes. Gorecki uses text from a 15th century Polish prayer as well as a "prayer inscribed on wall three of cell no. 3 in the basement of 'Palace,' the Gestapo's headquarters in Zakopane; beneath is the signature of Helena Wanda Blazusiakowna, and the words '18 years old, imprisoned since 26, September 1944'" (Liner notes, 1992). The work was later included in a concert in St. Magnus Church, Germany in 1989 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of Hitler's invasion of Poland. Using this score to accompany an exploration of the Holocaust made the idea seem possible and I played the CD in my office relentlessly.

Ballet Austin didn't receive funding for the idea and stopped pursuing the idea. I began thinking about the issues of the Holocaust while teaching social studies methods under the direction of Mary Lee Webeck and Sherry Field. Mary Lee guided me through her syllabus as I prepared to teach an undergraduate methods course. Using teaching resources from the Holocaust Museum Houston, I began to read more on the subject.

[3] The phrase "to set a work" is used to describe the process of choreographing a dance to a piece of music or on a group of dancers.

Stephen's Creation Story

Stephen tells a story of the beginning of the *Light Project* in serials that mark several stages in the development of the project. The stages, with different characters, converge to create sufficient persuasion for him to commit to the project.

Stephen revealed: "The Holocaust was always a subject matter that was of interest to me. I grew up in a small town in Kentucky and I wouldn't say it was the most tolerant place in the world, but it's always been in the back of my mind" (Mills Interview, 2004). His past experiences as a boy growing up in an intolerant place created a sensitivity to the issues of the Holocaust. Growing into adulthood, he read fiction, memoirs and histories on the subject (Interview, 2006). Interest turned into potential material for dance representation for him as he considered conversations with Herb and his family. These conversations occurred during the first year Stephen worked full-time as a free-lance choreographer, a time in which he defined himself as a professional choreographer, rather that a dancer who choreographed. His newly forming self-identification as a dance maker created the possibility of using this information artistically.

Cookie Ruiz amplifies the story in this way:

> A few years ago, I asked Stephen if there were no market research studies or demographics to consider and you could just create the work that was most in your heart, what would that be? His answer was really very quickly, the answer might surprise you, but it would be a work that had to do with the Holocaust. And it was very surprising (Ruiz Interview, 2005).

In April 2001, Ballet Austin had attempted to realize this idea as they sought funding from the National Dance Project (NDP) for a work titled "Rendered Savior," based on the stories of Herb Bitter. The grant summary included plans to collaborate with the Dell Jewish Community Center and "contract the services of a scholar of Holocaust

studies" and hire "an education/curriculum specialist" and commission "an internationally known composer" (NDP grant, April 2001). The funding panel denied the request. The comments suggested the panel questioned the capacity of the organization to attend to the difficult subject matter expertly. They questioned the Holocaust scholarship that would support the creative work. After the grant was denied, the project wilted. While the conversations with and about Herb Bitter encouraged Mills to explore an issue that held a lot of interest, the remarks from the NDP panel made him consider he might not be the right person to make this work.

The idea remained unrealized potential until future conversations with Mary Lee and Brent would fortify this longstanding interest with a compelling purpose:

> I first thought about making a Holocaust dance after conversations with Herb [Bitter], but it really took shape after conversations that you and Mary Lee were having about the Holocaust and the ways art and dance might be a way to educate people. Even though I had thought the subject might be something I would be interested in working on as a piece, it remained an amorphous idea until you and Mary Lee gave it purpose (Interview, 2006).

The renewed conversations with Mary Lee changed the landscape of possibilities. As Mills added:

> Mary Lee made the idea sound as though it HAD to be done. She was so enthusiastic about her work with Holocaust Museum Houston and the Warren Fellowship. She made me feel as though what I had to offer as an artist was needed, wanted and invaluable (Interview, 2006).

Mills trusted Webeck's status as an educator and a scholar of the Holocaust. As these conversations compounded, each providing a resonant echo, Mills committed to pursue the project.

Mary Lee's Creation Story

Mary Lee described the moment the project began for her in September of 2003.

She and Sherry Field met at the conference table in our office suite common area to catch up after some time spent traveling. They had last been together in Houston for the first Warren Holocaust Fellowship at Holocaust Museum Houston. Their discussions included reminiscences, ways in which they might extend thanks, and ways in which they might follow-up with both the Fellows and communicate the experiences to their current Elementary Social Studies Methods students. The conversation turned to finding ways to incorporate some aesthetic component into their lesson using the educational trunks from the Museum. Overhearing this from my office, I brought out the Gorecki CD I had been playing as a requiem for my recently completed doctoral candidacy exams, I suggested I had the perfect score to play while the students were exploring the contents of the trunk. While the music played, I briefly recounted my understanding of the context in which Gorecki composed it and the subsequent status it has received as a commemorative work. Offhandedly, I mentioned Stephen's interest in creating a work to this music, involving themes of the Holocaust. Webeck recalls:

> Sherry and I were talking about the trunks and you said something to the effect of 'Stephen has always wanted to do a ballet about the Holocaust' and I said 'Cool!' or something like that … it blossomed in that moment (Interview, 2006).

After Sherry left the office, Mary Lee pressed further, "I would love to see what Stephen did with a Holocaust ballet." I recounted some of his fears. Stephen worried he might not be the artist to create a work on this topic. He worried he would make a work that somehow diminished the importance of the subject. He feared he didn't have sufficient content knowledge in the Holocaust to avoid making hurtful mistakes. Mary Lee smiled and said, "That's our job". In that moment, the blossoming, as she called it, occurred. While Stephen felt he couldn't do it alone, Mary Lee reminded me that he

wasn't alone. We each had parts to play. Partnerships arise from the mutual satisfaction of individual needs.

Mary Lee had experience working with artists. She said "I was fortunate enough to have the opportunity in my first year of teaching to participate in an artist residency program because no other teacher in the school would take the artist" (Interview Data, 2006). Her interest in "seeing what Stephen did with a Holocaust ballet" continued her own exploration of the role of art and aesthetics in understanding, particularly in understanding trauma. Her dissertation, in part, explored the role of art and art making "with children dealing with trauma generally, as well their own trauma and in the understanding of history" (Interview 2006). Although she didn't have prior experience with dance she trusted it would impact learning in similar ways. For Mary Lee, this offered the next installment in teaching through the arts about trauma and traumatic times. She said, "We talk all the time about HOW we should do things. This seemed like a test case (for lack of a better word) for pushing the limits of what we should be doing" (Interview 2006). She added:

> I talk about involving students in complex interactions. I talk to my college students all the time saying that young children are capable… of dealing with difficult subjects… If they are capable in the fourth grade, they should be even more capable in middle school and more capable in high school … and more capable in college, but that isn't always what we teach. So I was very interested in how experiences could be enhanced with children to help them think in complex ways – not black or white but all of the colors (Interview 2006).

Webeck positioned this project as an opportunity to put into practice her new theoretical understandings she gained from a dissertation study of other arts-based activities. In this way, what was to become the *Light Project* was another serial in the story of her larger research project.

The Stories Converge: The *Light Project* Begins

On October 28, 2003, Christine Vasquez the Education Director of the Holocaust Museum Houston emailed Sherry and Mary Lee stating the Warren family had agreed to fund their participation on a trip to Eastern Europe in the summer of 2004. She wrote: "I'm hoping we can have them (the Warren's) fund two spots a year so the Fellows will apply, but I wanted the faculty to go first. You need to – it will change your life" (Personal communication, October, 2003). The opportunity to visit seven concentration and work camps in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic with a group of educators interested in Holocaust education seemed remarkably timed.

The trip itinerary listed Holocaust sites in Berlin; a tour of the Sachsenhausen Concentration Camp in Oranienburg; the Buchenwald camp in Weimar, the site of the Nuremburg Trials; important Jewish landmarks in Prague, and the camp and prison section at Terezin. The tour also planned visits to the historical sites of Krakow, including the death camps of Auschwitz and Birkenau in Ozweiscim; the Majdanek death camp in Lublin, and concluded with historical sites in Warsaw including the Warsaw ghetto.

Mary Lee accepted the offer to attend the summer trip by email, and added an idea of her own:

> From our conversation while you were here, I gather that there will be additional spots available on the trip for community members, scholars, etc. If that is the case – there is another wonderful idea in the works here, and I'm going to go ahead and mention it to you so we can think about next steps to make this happen, too. Brent Hasty, one of our soon to be Doctoral Candidates who is deeply involved in the arts and education field in TX and around the country… has suggested an idea that Sherry and I think is inspired. His partner, Stephen Mills, is the Artistic Director of Ballet Austin, and one of Stephen's passions has been to create an original ballet about the Holocaust experience, with an educational focus. Brent has proposed that he and Stephen become a part of this summer's learning journey… I'm thinking this would be a wonderful collaboration for us to

> develop as we continue to find new ways in which to involve students in experiences around the Holocaust (Personal communication, October 28, 2003)

This introduction opened a door of possibility for the project. The project at this moment existed only in theory. Prior attempts to realize the project had been stalled from a lack or educational resources. Through this introduction, Mary Lee created a mechanism for scaffolding an historical understanding of the period for Stephen and me that could help us reasonably accomplish the challenges of the project. It would prove to have many more long lasting resonances. This introduction began a profound personal relationship with the museum and with the Warren family.

Christine responded to the email by encouraging us to raise sufficient funding to make the trip and added, "I think this is a dynamic idea. It's beyond wonderful. Maybe I can get up there in November or December to discuss this with all of you. It is truly inspiring and far-reaching!!!" (Personal communication, October 29, 2003). With this volley, Stephen, Mary Lee, Sherry, Cookie and I all agreed the *Light Project* could have a life.

Chapter Five: Design and Development of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*

Illustration 14: Sachsenhausen tour leader with camp scale model and aerial map. Photograph by author.

Once on the trip, Mary Lee, Stephen and I became amused at the pattern we noticed among tour guides at the historical sites we visited in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. The tour always began in front of the map. I suppose it served as an advanced organizer that provided a mental schema of the site or it allowed the guide an opportunity to talk in general terms about the Holocaust and this site's particular role in that period without linking the discussion to a specific artifact or structure. Maybe it served a more practical role in showing the restrooms and the bookstore. Regardless, the tour always began at the map.

The tour of this project will also begin with a map, of sorts. Early in the project, I created a document to introduce our project idea to others. I created a Gantt chart, accompanied by an organizational graphic that detailed some of the activities we had planned with an associated timeline projection. (See Figure 2). The project was divided into two sections: the development phase and the implementation phase.

The development phase was planned to occur between January and December 2004. It included three primary activities: project design, research, and development. Although no specific design and development activities were listed beyond preparing for the implementation activities, the research phase lists the Warren Fellowship, the Educator's Tour to Europe and on-going research. The implementation phase, scheduled from January through May 2005, listed the ballet, professional development for in-service and pre-service teachers and teaching materials. School based and community based engagement activities followed. This production phase would be succeeded by a documentation phase.

This paper will use this basic construct to outline the development of the project. Since this map was created prior to the project, additional topics will be discussed when appropriate.

- Development Phase (January – December 2004)
    - Design (January – May 2004)
    - Research (May – June 2004, ongoing)
    - Development (September – December 2004)
- Implementation Phase
    - Implementation (January – May 2005)
    - Implementation (May – September 2005)

- Phase Two (September – December 2005

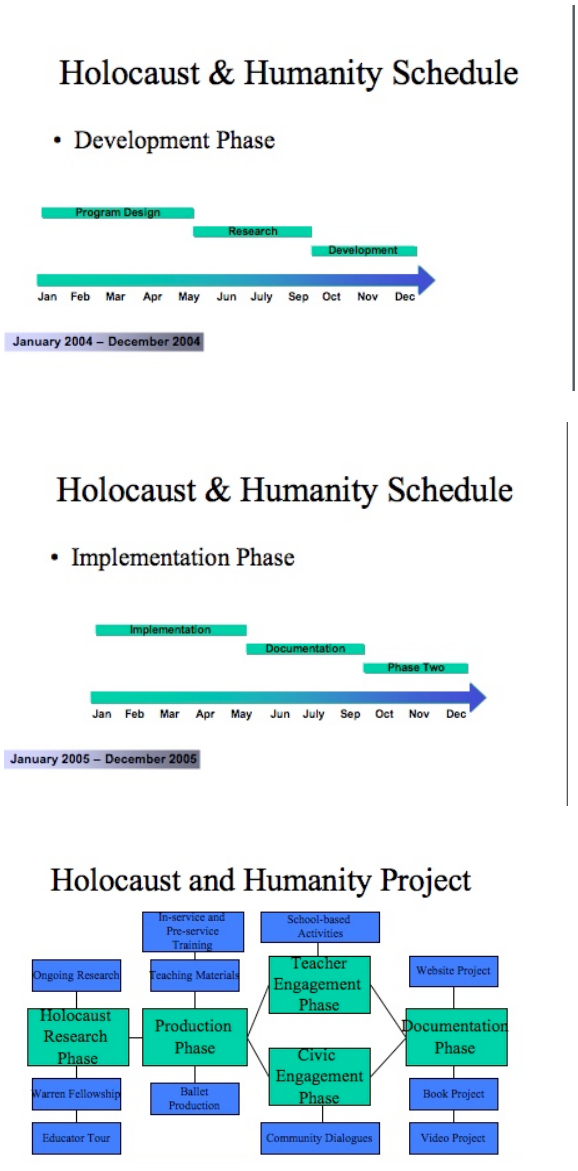

Figure 2: Gantt charts created February 10, 2004 for meeting with the Warren Family.

OUTLINING A MISSION STATEMENT: MARKING A PATH

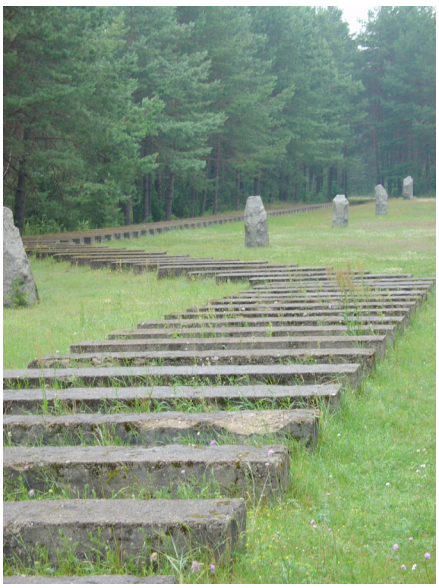

Illustration 15: Memorial Installation at Treblinka Death Camp. Stones mark the perimeter of the camp and the path of a transport rail line. Photograph by author.

On January 12, 2004, Mary Lee and I created a statement to communicate the mission of the project as we envisioned it. We developed the text through an iterative process, beginning with a conversation to establish an outline, passing a first draft that I wrote between us until we agreed upon the following statement:

> The University of Texas at Austin, Ballet Austin, the Warren Family Foundation, and the Holocaust Museum Houston will collaborate to develop a model for artistic, educational, and community involvement to support a deeper understanding of the historic events of the Holocaust and contemporary events which include increasing incidences of hate-speech and marginalization of the "other." We work to foster the possibility of well-engaged civic dialogue to promote a common humanity (January 28, 2004).

The mission was prospective. We hoped to have partners in the Warren Family Foundation and Holocaust Museum Houston, but at the time of this draft they were not

committed to the project. This early document does outline two important features central to the project: the transdisciplinary nature of the project combing arts, education and community involvement; and a study of the Holocaust and contemporary issues. In this case, we identified "hate-speech and marginalization of the 'other'" to describe contemporary examples, but we did not articulate the clearer principle "of promoting tolerance and human dignity against acts of bigotry and hate".

The mission statement for the *Light Project* evolved through edits from the leadership team and public relations professionals to become:

> *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* is a unique citywide Holocaust education partnership that promotes tolerance and human dignity against bigotry and hate through arts, education and public dialogue. (Executive Summary, Nov. 22, 2004)

Although there is some inconsistency in the use of this mission statement across documents, the mission statement above appeared most commonly in printed materials. Each variation contained the essential project intentions: the full name of the project, the phrase "art, education and civic", a reference to bigotry and hate, and the examination of the Holocaust to inform understandings of current events. Characteristics that are inconsistent among the statements include: the use of the word tolerance, a statement of uniqueness of the project, references to the "lessons" of the Holocaust and the use of dialogue as an outcome or a process. We came to agree upon this mission statement through a series of email exchanges. However, several issues were explored most fully during leadership meetings.

The primacy of the role of dialogue in the mission statement was the subject of some debate. The discussion focused, not on the centrality of dialogue, but on the status of dialogue as an indicator of success. The Leadership team agreed that dialogue was

paramount to the success of the project. Some argued success of the project would be achieved if dialogue occurred, others argued the dialogue required a change in tolerance of differences in order for success to be achieved. When dialogue as an end-state goal was preferred, the mission statements focused on the creation of dialogic encounters (bolding added):

> *Light: The Holocaust & Humanity Project* is a unique endeavor **using art to create community dialogue** around the lessons of the Holocaust, applying the learnings to the topics of bigotry and hate in contemporary society. (Personal Communication, Oct. 25, 2004)
>
> *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* is shaped around our desire **to promote community-wide dialogue** around the Holocaust and contemporary issues through art, education, and community conversation. (Personal Communication, Nov 10, 2004)

When dialogue as a strategy to achieve a changed state, the mission statements focused on the qualities of interpersonal relationships (bolding added):

> *Light: The Holocaust & Humanity Project* **promotes tolerance and the protection of human rights** against bigotry and hate through arts, education and public dialogue. (Personal Communication, Oct 22, 2004)

Finally, this approach appeared in the written mission statements as "citywide Holocaust education partnership that promotes tolerance and human dignity against bigotry and hate" in order to stress the need to affect change. However the group agreed that we would be satisfied with the first step, being responsible for a conversation occurring. The following paragraph was added to acknowledge our faith in dialogue:

> Light: The Holocaust & Humanity Project repositions art and the university in a **central role as the convener of important community conversations** about the Holocaust and how its study can inform contemporary actions. (Executive Summary, Nov. 22, 2004)

The conversation that sparked the most and longest lasting debate surrounded the inclusion of the word "tolerance" in the project. Was tolerance too low a standard for the kind of relationships we hoped to foster? Should we rather strive for coexistence or even respect? Was respect an unreasonable expectation? If tolerating another was a prerequisite to peaceful coexistence, could we be happy with that first step? One email flurry captures the spirit of the debate:

> Is tolerance the right standard? Is it OK for me to simply tolerate you? Or is it mutual respect? (Rudy, personal communication, January 20, 2004, 11:34 AM).
>
> Ideally it is both. But for purposes of articulating our objectives, tolerance has to be the focal point. We may be able to teach one another the importance of tolerating another (e.g. Sunni/Shiite) but not get them to be respectful of one another…. So, I am fixated on TOLERANCE as our talisman (Meredith, personal communication, January 20, 2005, 12:13 PM).
>
> Agreed. It would be great if we could get mutual respect but as long as people agree not to kill each other, sometimes that is the best that can be hoped for (Mills, personal communication, January 20, 2005, 1:33 PM).
>
> I'm onboard with tolerance. I hope I didn't offend anyone by bringing it up (Rudy, personal communication January 20, 2005, 1:37 PM).

Respectful, thoughtful, realistic, and idealistic, these emails struggle to articulate a hope for our community, and for our world. There was a profound sense that our world was an intolerant place. Global examples like 9/11 and Darfur, national examples like the polarizing tactics of the 2004 election, state examples of the anti-gay marriage amendment proposed in the state constitution, and local examples including a police shooting that seemed racially motivated followed by a police email reading "Burn baby burn" as firefighters were controlling a fire at a popular black night club. A few days later Meredith wrote to a local African American pastor about the need for the project. He asserted, "The project potentially can help us get back to a level of civility which is

sorely needed." In a separate email response a few hours later, he reinforced "the need for our community to learn what it means to be tolerant – and conversely not to be so – stuff like red/blue, black/white, gay/non-gay all are issues worthy of meaningful dialogue" (Personal communication, January 24, 2005). His emails carried a sense of deep political hope grounded in the need for dialogue. While we would revisit the standard implied by the word tolerance throughout the project, we did not argue about the need to address the problem. These ongoing conversations provided continued assurance to the group we were working towards the same mission.

These discussions always reminded me of a line from a Bertolt Brecht poem that haunted me throughout this project. In the liner notes of the Gorecski CD of "Symphony #3", the author mentioned the program commemorating the 50th anniversary of the invasion of Poland during which the symphony was performed with a reading of this poem. When I found the original poem, "To those born later" (Brecht, 1939 in Speirs, 2000), the final stanza struck me in powerful ways. The last stanza reads:

And in the future when no longer
Do human beings still treat themselves as animals,
Look back on us with indulgence.

The first time I read the line, I reeled at his use of the pronoun "themselves." His shift away from more typical language of treating "others" as animals, making distinctions among human beings, to treating "ourselves" as animals, stunned me. I stood still on my balcony overlooking the city, thinking about the myriad of ways in which we were treating ourselves as animals. I thought about many of the forced dichotomies and binaries I confront in daily life, those that we discussed and those that we did not. Clearly, we were (and are) still in wait of the time Brecht references in the poem. While

Brecht could ask posterity for indulgence, I could not accept my/our seeming self-indulgence. Using the reflexive pronoun, Brecht reminded me of my responsibility in this disrupted state. Whether we would strive for tolerance or respect became secondary to the need for action.

Seeking Assurances

Action required certain assurances. We sought assurances from: partners, whose help we needed to implement the transdisciplinary work; from survivors, whose memories we would be sharing; from wise counsel, who's judgment we trusted to tell us if our idea was foolhardy; and from community leaders, whose support we needed to implement the project. While we felt assurances were required to begin the project, ongoing assurances maintained the partnership.

The Assurance of Partnership

The project required a strong Holocaust education partner. The rejection of the National Dance Project grant taught us a lesson about the need for assurances of disciplinary capacity beyond "a Holocaust scholar." In addition to the organizational and content rich resources a Holocaust education partner could provide, a significant partner could bring authority to the project.

Three months had passed since Christina Vasquez, the Education Director of HMH wrote her enthusiastic email about the potential for the project that promised a meeting. We held that meeting on February 23rd, 2004. Christine liked the idea of the project, suggesting it might bring visibility to the Museum's 10th anniversary celebrations. We agreed to continue the conversation by meeting with the Warren family and Susan Llanes-Myers, the Executive Director of the Museum.

Mary Lee arranged a series of meetings in Houston for March 6, 2004. She forwarded the project as an extension of the Warren Fellowship. In her request for a meeting with the Executive Director of the Museum, Webeck framed the project this way:

> Sherry, Joan and I have been so fortunate to work with HMH through the Warren Fellowship experience, and now we envision possible ways to extend our work with benefits to the museum. As I know Christina told you, we are not asking the Warrens for financial support…. But want to have their support and yours as we proceed with our work and ideas (Webeck, personal communication, March 2, 2004).

In this email, Webeck anticipated a potential barrier to the HMH partnership: cannibalizing funding from a major donor. During our breakfast meeting with the Warren family at the Houstonian Hotel in Houston, Mary Lee repeated her request for support. The Warrens, Naomi, Benjamin and Helen, expressed interest in the idea. They wanted to know more about how the Warren Fellows would be integrated into the program, but seemed surprised at the novelty of the idea. Benjamin suggested he never would have imagined the Fellowship would yield this kind of activity.

That afternoon, after working in the photo archives at the museum, we met with Susan. She liked the idea. She envisioned ways in which the HMH could provide educational opportunities for the dancers and artistic staff. She mentioned how this project might serve the Museum's goals of establishing a greater regional presence. She suggested we meet with the leadership of the Museum's Board.

That evening, during a reception at the Museum, Susan convened an unscheduled meeting with the out-going Board President Joel Spira and the in-coming Board President Eileen Weisman. Their comments focused on a need for historical accuracy and protecting their brand identity. Spira wondered if the production would be factual or an

artistic interpretation. The framing of these two ideas as binaries stumped me. I suggested it would be based in fact but would not be a narrative story that portrayed the goose-stepping Nazi's invading Poland. The work would be metaphoric but not impressionistic.

I suggested our intention for seeking the Museum as a partner included our desire for the Museum to support effective Holocaust education and that included making sure that nothing historically inaccurate was being presented. He asked pointedly if the Museum would have editorial control. I suggested they would not have input into artistic choices. As examples, I said they would not be able to ask for costume color changes or movement changes because someone preferred a more classical vocabulary, but as partners they would have a voice at the table should there be a concern about historical accuracies or survivor sensitivities. I was skating on thin ice negotiating artistic controls. The next morning Susan wrote, "Just wanted to let you know that Joel, Eileen and I are all excited about the project. We will have to run it by the Executive Committee… I would say there is a 99% chance that it is a go" (Llanes-Myers, personal communication, March 8, 2004). The Board approved the partnership on March 22, 2004.

The Assurance of Survivors

Our breakfast meeting with the Warren's had two aims: first, to seek permission to proceed with the project, on behalf of the Warren Fellowship; secondly, to seek permission from Naomi, on behalf of survivors. The permission occurred gradually. At breakfast Naomi seemed to find the idea intriguing, but remained quiet. I remember she said, "Hmmm… a ballet?" Her head tilted. She seemed to like the idea, adding she had just seen a production at the Houston Ballet the night before that explored Jewish themes, but she did not commit.

We arranged a meeting on April 4, 2004 at The University of Texas at Austin. The Chair of Curriculum and Instruction Department, Sherry and Mary Lee represented the College, Susan and the Warren family represented the HMH, and Stephen, Cookie and Michelle Martin represented Ballet Austin. Cookie described the anticipation of meeting her first survivor this way:

> I thought the day I woke up when I was going to meet Naomi, that nothing after that day was ever going to be the same. And nothing on the other side has been the same. I will never forget that day (Interview, 2006).

Meeting survivors is a charged experience. During this meeting, Naomi remained quiet. Mills described it as guarded (Interview 2007). Her few questions were directed at Mills. The questions, as I remember them, focused specifically on the production of the ballet. What music will you use? What will it look like? Stephen expressed his reticence to Naomi several times. Although not explicit, he sought her permission. He said, as I recall, "Maybe I'm not the right person to do this work." To which she replied, "Yes, do it. But show the hope. Hope is the most important thing." Cookie described the resonance of the exchange this way in a note she later wrote to Naomi:

> You honored us more than you will ever know the day Stephen and I first met you and you gave him permission and blessing to start this journey…. One that we would not have done without your endorsement. By allowing us to walk this difficult emotional road, you are helping us open the hearts and minds of a community that truly wants to be the best it can be (Ruiz, personal communication, January 26, 2005).

Naomi's assurance catalyzed the mission through not only her embodiment of the issue, but through her ongoing interactions and assurances. After Naomi's visit with the dancer's of Ballet Austin, Ruiz detailed these assurances to Naomi, "I can not adequately convey the magic you spread throughout Austin yesterday with every hand you touched, every hug you gave, every kind word you shared with our dancers, our staff and our

community" (Ruiz, personal communication, January 26, 2005). While not a physical presence, only coming to Austin three times during the course of the project, she remained present in the leadership and artists involved in the project. Ruiz said:

> Naomi served as the soul of the project. The idea that the project could have a face and a soul through her… made it more tangible than if we had done the same project and we did not have the personal experience (Ruiz Interview, December 2005).

Cookie, Stephen, Brent, Mary Lee and Ballet Austin staff members Eugene Alvarez, Michelle Martin kept pictures of Naomi at their desks, as a constant assurance. Naomi added feelings to the mission. Not just emotion or passion, but a responsibility to be sensitive to the people who populated the stories, dead and alive, successful and unsuccessful in adjusting to life after the camp experience.

While Naomi provided many of us with assurances to continue our work, her presence required a reciprocal assurance from us to be sensitive to her experiences and her memories as a survivor. The assurance of sensitivity manifested itself in the desire to "get it right" for the sake of survivors. Mills described it this way:

> From the moment I met Naomi Warren the project became something I would approach with a bit of trepidation, a great deal of respect and a feeling that I was entering a place not many people have the opportunity to go. My trepidation stemmed from the fact that Naomi and all the other survivors that I was fortunate enough to meet carried a weight with them that I could never imagine, a weight filled with loss, terror, and pain. Would I be perceived as taking advantage of their past horrors? Would I unwittingly say or do something to cause them greater anguish. I think because of my fear I took my responsibility as a student very seriously (Personal communication, January 2006).

The relationship generated mutual expectation. Each encounter with a survivor added a layer of complexity to the expectation. On March 24, 2004, Teresa Long set up a meeting

for Cookie and Stephen to meet Andre and Helen Pradzynski. Cookie recalls the meeting this way:

> After meeting Naomi, Stephen and I had the great honor of meeting the Pradzynski's. We heard their story for two hours. To know today they actually live behind a gate, after 60 years, they are still somewhat locked up or in fear. The intimacy of knowing that came with a burden – OK, What do we do with it? (Ruiz, Interview, 2005).

Despite their reluctance to provide their own testimony, the Pradzynski's also told Stephen he must join them in telling their story. Mr. Pradzynski said:

> It is not easy for me to talk and recall these experiences. I'd rather forget about them and enjoy life in pursuit of happiness and consume the fruits of my hard labor over my life, but I feel my obligation. I talk about the Holocaust mainly because I think that this can happen again. It may happen in any country in the world, including our United States (Pradzynski, Interview, 2005).

The Pradzynski's added that Mills must show the efforts of resistance that occurred during the Holocaust. Living in Warsaw, Helen fought in the underground. Mr. Pradzynski said:

> Children must know… you cannot be indifferent. When you see wrong you have to react to it. You cannot tolerate wrong. We have seen a lot of cases where people looked the other way. And not just individuals, nations, organizations, looked away when a wrong was being done (Interview, 2005).

They also encouraged Stephen not to shy away from the horror and degradation that the victims experienced. Survivor Max Brenner added, "The story must be told. Only with true knowledge can… future generations be on guard and keep such things from happening again" (Interview, 2005). Both Mr. Brenner and Mr. Pradzynski contributed their taped testimonies to be televised during the Town Hall meeting. Their actions represented an ongoing assurance for the support of the partnership. These assurances

given through the survivors' permission and interaction carried with them a responsibility to tell the story in particular ways.

The Assurances of Wise Counsel

On March 18, 2004, we met with Curtis Meadows, the former head of the Meadows Foundation, who was then the Director of the LBJ School Center for Philanthropy. Our reasons for meeting him were complex. He offered wise counsel, having a long history in the non-profit community, and we wanted to introduce the idea to him in case he might be able to help direct funding towards the project. The meeting turned out to be different than anyone expected, Mary Lee used the term "diametrically different" (Webeck, personal communication, March 1, 2004). In many ways, it proved pivotal.

We described our project to him and asked his advice. He began to tell us all the ways in which the project would be difficult, if not impossible. He outlined the ways in which we were treading on sacred ground. He described the ways in which some communities felt a sense of control over the telling of the story. He described ways in which the board of directors of the ballet might not want to be associated with such a depressing topic. He warned us to prepare for controversies from Holocaust deniers and others who might be offended by the subject. He cautioned the possible withdrawals of support from sponsors. He laid out the risk to Stephen's reputation. He laid out any number of possible missteps that could occur. As Cookie described, "He laid out how difficult it was going to be and how it might not even be a good idea, but told us to do it anyway. The harder it became the more important it seemed" (Ruiz, Interview, 2006). Mary Lee thanked him for "helping us to put words around some of the tensions that a project of such depth and nature creates. In doing so you provided insight into ways in

which we can proceed in an ethically correct manner" (Webeck, personal communication, March, 17, 2004).

He extended our 30 minute scheduled meeting to almost 90 minutes. We left shaken, but even more resolute. Meadows provided an assurance of resolve.

The Assurances of Community Leaders

Kirk Rudy first asked me to tell him more about "the project" at a backstage party in March of 2004. It took me by surprise. Frankly, I wasn't sure which project he wanted to know about: the new building project, the Dallas ArtsPartners project, or the *Light Project*. His wife Amy mentioned the *Light Project* to him after she was briefed in an Executive Board meeting at Ballet Austin. Kirk's excitement seemed amplified even amid the post-performance euphoria that seems to be contagious at some of these parties. We agreed to have dinner soon. A few weeks later, May 10, 2004, Stephen, Kirk, Amy and I met at Uchi, a hip sushi restaurant. Although we had spent some time together, including a two-day birthday celebration trip to Las Vegas in August of 2003 with another couple, we weren't close friends. Dinner that night was a new experience for me. While I was familiar with mixing business and pleasure, socializing with fundraising, inspirational programmatic ideas with the need for capital, I had never had to make a fundraising request explicitly. Previously my role had always been to create enthusiasm. It was a complicated dinner for me.

The dinner was complicated by the fact that Ballet Austin was in the beginning stages of a ten million dollar capital campaign. The Rudy's had agreed to contribute to the capital campaign, but also wanted to give to "the Holocaust Project." My charge from the capital campaign steering committee was to negotiate the amounts.

At dinner, Kirk described the way in which this project provided an opportunity to blend his interest in Jewish causes with Amy's interest in the arts. This project gave them a chance to work together as a team. Amy joked about the importance of this project to their marriage. There was something powerful in the idea of working on a project with your spouse. I empathized with Amy, because my spousal role shifted in this project in ways similar to hers, moving from a supporting role to a partnering role in volunteer activities. During dinner, Kirk and Amy committed a generous gift of $50,000 to the capital campaign and wanted to provide a lead gift of $25,000 to the *Light Project*. Furthermore, and more significantly, they wanted to serve as leaders in the project.

By committing their leadership to the project, Kirk and Amy Rudy provided an assurance that the project would have a commitment from the community. Their generous financial gift represented 25% of our projected budget. This leadership gift provided an assurance of our financial capacity to implement the project. The *Light Project* needed individual leadership from the community to compliment the organizational support provided by the partnering organizations to insure the possibility of success.

THE *LIGHT PROJECT* PROGRAM DESIGN

Illustration 16: Doll with photos reflecting on the glass display case in the Majdanek Concentration Camp. Photograph by Mary Lee Webeck.

The program design for the *Light Project* occurred in both planned and emergent ways. The planned events considered carefully the ways in which representational forms, place, and social interactions allowed access to greater understanding of the Holocaust. The emergent events were integrated into the program as a result of a consistency of theme and a theoretical resonance to our design concept. Within the design concept, the specific programming activities, both planned and emergent, benefited from lucky coincidences. For example, one partner had planned for a major speaker but needed additional resources. By collaborating with the *Light Project* Lecture Series, a mutually beneficial relationship combined fundraising and marketing efforts to make certain maximum number of people benefited from the highest quality experiences.

Functional Design Elements

The first draft of program design (See Figure 3) contained a remarkable resemblance to the final design (See Figure 4). The programmatic elements described in the January 28, 2004 draft included: a ballet, public lectures, educational resources, professional development activities, and a framework for civic dialogue, scholarly investigations and documentation of the model. By February 23, 2004, separate frameworks for dialogue around the ballet and the lecture series were specified, in addition to a UT Press book proposal, a Knowledge Gateway Holocaust education website project, and a graduate level course in Holocaust education.

DRAFT: 1-28-04

Through the arts, scholarship, and research, the Humanity Project engages civic activity within and between an arts organization, a university, a philanthropic foundation, a Holocaust museum, and artistic and educational communities. The Humanity Project proposes to produce:

- An original full-length ballet production*;

- Scholarly investigations

- Public lectures and seminars with scholars of the Holocaust (ex. Paul Shapiro), civic dialogue (ex. Walter Parker/ED, Bill Rawlins/COM), the dance (ex._____) and the arts and representation (ex. Elliott Eisner);

- A framework for the engagement in civic dialogue;

- Education resources to support content-rich and reflective experience;

- Professional development preparation for pre-and in-service teachers;

- Documentation and dissemination of the programmatic model; and

- Scientific research investigating the intersection of philanthropy, the arts, arts education, and civil engagement/dialogue.

(*Original full-length ballet production -- An original full-length ballet production Stephen Mills, Artistic Director of Ballet Austin, will choreograph a full-length ballet in response to the scholarly investigation of the Holocaust provided through the Warren Fellowship.)

Figure 3: First programmatic draft of the *Light Project* created January 28, 2004.

The final version, included on a postcard I created on February 4, 2005, listed many of the same design elements, adding and deleting only a few (See Figure 6). The durability of the program design seems surprising considering the vagueness of the original plan.

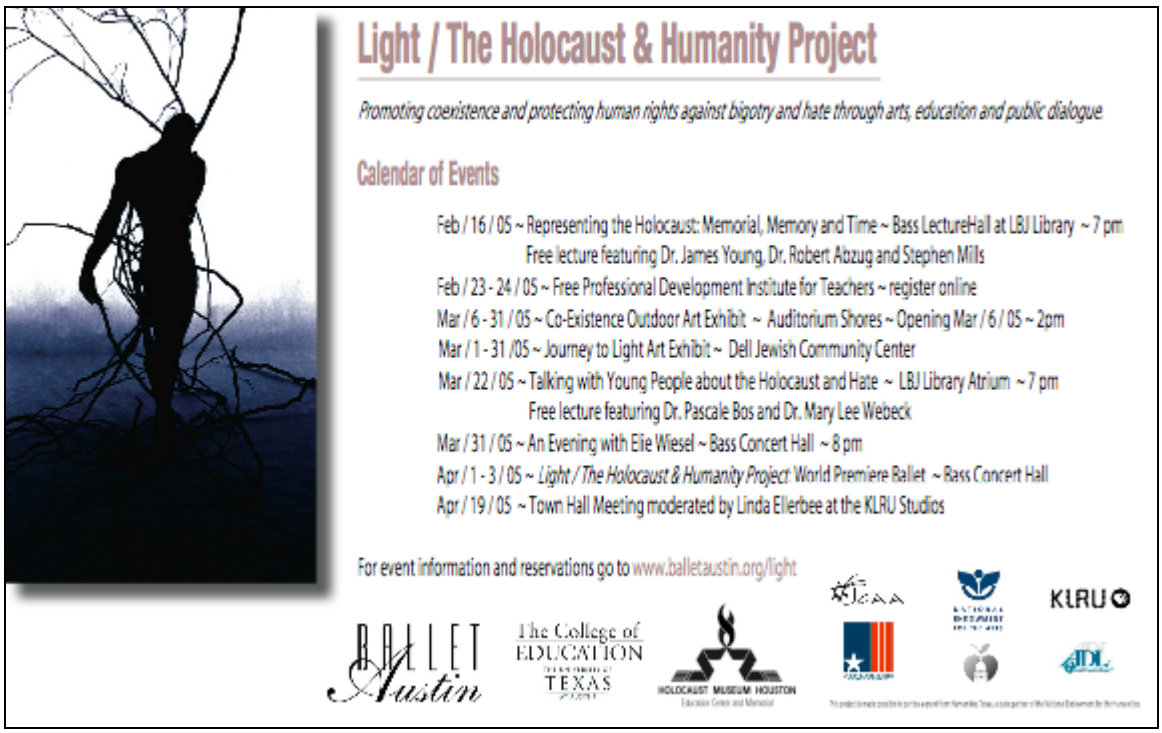

Figure 4: Final program design listed on an event card created for distribution by the author.

While very few of the specific ideas listed in the original drafting occurred, the type of programming occurred. Our program design allowed us to use existing resources as a base, filling out the content through our partnership and theoretical intentions. We used typical formats like lectures and public art exhibits, in unique combinations.

The following chart outlines the drafted event next to the event that occurred in the *Light Project*:

Initial Design Proposal	**Final Design Implementation**
An original full-length ballet production	World Premiere ballet: Light/ The Holocaust and Humanity Project
Scholarly investigations	Conference presentations at Americans for the Arts, Dance USA, Yad Vashem International Institute, AERA, CUFA, ARNOVA
	Published article in the Arts and Learning Research Journal
	Dissertation: In Search of the Deep Politic: The Case of an Arts, Education and Civic Partnership, Light/ The Holocaust and Humanity Project
Public lectures and seminars with scholars of the Holocaust (ex. Paul Shapiro), civic dialogue (ex. Walter Parker/ED, Bill Rawlins/COM), the dance (ex._____) and the arts and representation (ex. Elliott Eisner)	Lecture 1: Representing the Holocaust: Memorial, Memory and Time with J. Young, R. Abzug and S. Mills.
	Lecture 2: Talking with Young People about Holocaust and Hate with M. L. Webeck & P. Bos
	Lecture 3: An Evening with Elie Wiesel
A framework for the engagement in civic dialogue	Framework organized around the questions: How are the issues of the Holocaust relevant in our community today? What is our responsibility when confronted with acts of bigotry and hate? What actions can we take to promote understanding in our community?

	Televised Town Hall meeting w/ Linda Ellerbe
	Community Forum moderated by Rich Oppel
	Community Discussion during most public events
Education resources to support content-rich and reflective experience	Footnotes: A 16 page learning guide
Professional development for pre-and in-service teachers	Two day Professional Development Institute for Teachers
Documentation and dissemination of the programmatic model	Making of Light – 30 min. video documentary
	Photo-documentation by Hannah Neal
	Dissemination at conference presentations at Americans for the Arts, Dance USA, Yad Vashem International Institute, AERA, CUFA, ARNOVA
	Dissemination through national and local TV and print media coverage
	Dissemination through presentations at local meetings including LAMP, etc.

Figure 5: Comparison of *Light Project* Activities from first draft to final draft.

Several elements were added during the course of the project and some elements were not accomplished or deleted from the scope of the project. The following chart outlines those activities:

Items Not Accomplished or Deleted	Items Not Anticipated or Added
Scientific research investigating the intersection of philanthropy, the arts, arts education, and civil engagement/dialogue	(Not accomplished in form proposed, research took other forms)
UT Press Book Proposal	(Not accomplished)
Knowledge Gateway Website	(Not accomplished)
(Not anticipated)	Coexistence Art Exhibit: Month long outdoor art fair
(Not anticipated)	Journey to Light: Art Exhibition of photographs by Mary Lee Webeck and Hannah Neal

Figure 6: Items Not Accomplished or Not Anticipated in the original project design.

Anticipated Project Outcomes

Early in the *Light Project*, we drafted a list of quantitative target outcomes. These outcomes, or outputs, focused our energies on meeting standards. In quantitative terms, the program design effectively supported the proposed measures. The following chart outlines the degree to which these projections were accomplished:

Project Goal:	**Project Attainment:**
10 Partners	11 Partners
50 Teachers at Professional Development Institute	75 Teachers at Professional Development Institute
500 attend public lectures	3300 attend public lectures
3000 attend performance	3880 attend performance
500 attend community dialogue	971 attend community dialogue
100 attend town hall meeting	200 attend town hall meeting
1000 read Holocaust book	Unmeasured

Figure 7: Comparison of *Light Project* goals and attainment figures.

Designing for Community Integration

In the original statement, we proposed developing "a model for artistic, educational, and community involvement to support a deeper understanding of the historic events of the Holocaust and contemporary issues." This statement implied two criteria be met by the programming. First, the design needed to link the events of the Holocaust with contemporary issues. Secondly, the program design needed to integrate the arts, education and the community. I envisioned that integration in multiple ways: integrating the delivery practices of each sector across the system; integrating the dominant forms of representation within each sector across the system; and integrating the places each sector holds their activities. In this way, we attempted to use teaching practices in arts making, arts activities in educational environments, civic dialogue at arts events and hold classes in public spaces using the arts as an instructional tool.

Personal attempts at the deep politic: Re-envisioning the role of the arts

Through the project design we were reconsidering the relationship of the arts in community life. During my career in the arts, I have engaged in many conversations focused on the problem of sustainability of live performance brought on by an aging audience and reduced public support of the arts. I began to consider the broader question of relevance of community arts and cultural experiences in contemporary society. Maybe the declining participation wasn't an issue of the public "not getting it" as the arts and cultural community suggested, maybe they "got it" and simply weren't interested. The perceived marginalized status of the arts might stem from a lack of relevance, as Tom Wolfe warns threatens symphony orchestras content with serving an elite clientele (Wolfe, 2006). This problem intensified for mid-sized arts organizations as they balanced the need to cater to large audiences with limited resource capacities (RAND, 2001).

I began thinking about the arts' role in societies at their most fundamental. Working with a team of artists and cultural anthropologists in the mid 90's, I developed an elementary social studies and arts integration project called *Share The World*. In this project, we described five functions of the arts across cultures: 1) to entertain and celebrate; 2) explain and understand the world around us; 3) to record and remember history; 4) to mark rituals and rites of passage; and 5) to make and keep community. I began thinking about the ways in which contemporary American culture exercised these functions, particularly through community arts activities. While these functions do exist they are not central in contemporary American cultural life. Ballet companies served primarily to entertain. I sensed that if mid-sized arts and cultural organizations could refocus their efforts on these fundamental artistic functions in cultural life, they might have an opportunity to achieve the relevance often considered the primarily purview of

grass roots, community-based, participatory activities (Carlborg et al, 2004). To this end, my hope for the *Light Project* included a fundamental shift in the way Ballet Austin was perceived and operated in the community. I desired to see this arts organization intentionally leverage the social implications of art in cultures. Ballet Austin could refashion their organization as a primary convener of the community that took responsibility for the convening to not only entertain but also express ideas that helped us remember history, understand the world around us and strengthen our sense of community. Could a large urban dance company revive a pre-modern role of the arts in a contemporary cultural context? Could it break down the barriers of preconceptions of what ballet is, of what an arts organization is, of what a ballet company is in order to impact a community? We were applying traditionally civic practices to the administration of the arts.

Similarly, I hoped this project might move forward an educational reform agenda I'd been working for as a teacher and as a program director for an arts organization:

> One of my hopes for projects like *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*, is to reconceive the ways school and communities interact. If we can begin to think about how ideas that are addressed in classrooms can also be addressed in communities at large, we send students an important message about what they are learning in school. That these are important messages for humans to undertake, whether you are in the 6th grade or 60 years old (Hasty, Interview May 7, 2005).

I'd spent a significant portion of my career practicing and advocating for the dissolution of the barriers that inhibit the extension of classroom learning into community learning. By working to create educationally rich experiences that bridged learning inside and outside of schools, like *The Light Project,* I had a chance to see if this community alignment were possible and impactful. We attempted to extend the curriculum found in schools by placing similar explorations in community events.

For me this project grew, in part, from the recognition of the crisis of representation in educational practice. The limitations of typical representation in classrooms (decidedly text dominant, augmented by still images, documentary and dramatic video) guided us to seek out combinations of forms, to construct a rich field of inquiry for students, and then later, for the community. Acknowledging the limits of representation, the program design supported the unique and non-redundant information each form contributed to an understanding of the Holocaust. We sought not to transplant or overburden any one form of representation, but to layer forms and potential entry points for understanding. Similarly, by providing variety in our sites of inquiry and focusing on serving different groups of people and populations, our series of events became more multidimensional. We sought to disrupt the traditional notions surrounding the use of community arts and cultural resources.

ANOMALOUS PLACES OF LEARNING: THE STORY OF THREE TRIPS

Illustration 17: Mills listening to Gorecki's Symphony No. 3 at Treblinka Death Camp Memorial. Photograph by author.

The *Light Project* presented a high degree of risk. We were warned that Holocaust projects suffer tremendous scrutiny, usually resulting in criticism. Most project team members were not Holocaust scholars, but the responsibility for historical integrity would be shared by all of us. By accepting the *Light Project* as an educational project, as much as an artistic or civic project, we knew we would be called upon to talk about the Holocaust from a position of knowledge, if not expertise. The project required immediate and powerful education and significant ongoing support in Holocaust content.

Stephen and I searched for understanding in anomalous places of learning. Ellsworth (2005) identifies those places by their attempts to address "visitors as bodies whose movements and sensations are crucial to their understandings" (p. 42). Anomalous places, by design, recognize the place of learning imparts understanding both

separate and in relation to the content delivered in the space. She describes the ways in which these spaces create what she calls a pedagogical hinge by putting the inner world of the learning in relation to the outer world.

Three trips provided a pedagogical hinge for Stephen and me. Attending the Warren Fellowship at Holocaust Museum Houston; traveling on a tour for Holocaust educators to Holocaust-related sites in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic; and traveling on a mission trip to Israel, each created unique opportunities for us to understand the Holocaust, the nature of learning and ourselves differently.

Warren Fellowship for Future Teachers: Suspending the Rules of Engagement

Illustration 18: Display at Holocaust Museum Houston combining historical photographs, artifacts and the personal stories of Houston survivors.

From May 16th – 20th, 2004 Stephen and I attended the Warren Fellowship for Future Teachers. We were not pre-service teachers, although we were there as learners.

We were not faculty, although we were asked to present to the group. We held a middle place we named Artistic Fellows.

The fellowship begins with a tour of the building. The building's strong design resonated with me. The dominant architectural feature inside the space is the two steel rafters that bisect the museum. Overhead they span from the entrance through the museum's main corridor with a forced perspective that leads the eye to the memorial stone outside. Reminding us of the train tracks that supported the deportations, these rafters support a metaphoric journey to understand the complexity of meanings found in this memorial museum. (My language here is intended to be as dramatic as the space.) The museum's exhibit of artifacts and images is arranged chronologically in three phases: life before, life during and life after the Holocaust. This is common in Holocaust museum curatorial practice. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (USHMM), Yad Vashem, The Museum of Tolerance, Jewish Museum of Berlin and the Museum of Jewish Heritage, among others, employ this strategy.

The space at HMH combines historical artifacts, video and still images and narrative text to communicate. The space planning does not add to the experience in the complex ways the exhibitions at Yad Vashem and USHMM serve a metaphoric intention. The museum designers do make two attempts to alter the space to create heightened sensation for the viewer. The designers install only one turn in the narrative leading up to the section exploring deportation. After this section, the designers increase the number of turns, shortening the length of the displays. This disruption of physical space coincides with the disruption of lives the exhibition is attempting to communicate. It also reinforces a sense of forced choices. The space planners also lower the ceiling as the chronology progresses. Just as the world became increasingly smaller for the victims of the Nazis

during this period, so does the room become smaller for the visitor while studying it in the museum.

Holocaust Museum Houston uses local stories to amplify the relevance of the experience. The exhibition includes family portraits of Houston survivors in the beginning of the installation. Throughout the collection, personal artifacts such as a baby dress and letters from Liberators, highlight the participation of Houstonians. The exhibition concludes with several video testimonies of Holocaust survivors from the Houston area. The metaphoric use of space and the focus on the local individual were important understandings for Stephen and me.

Will Meinecke, a historian with the USHMM, provided an essential link to Holocaust content through his four lectures for the Warren Fellows. His overview of the Holocaust using image-based instruction provides a thorough and clear grounding in basic Holocaust education. He also provided very interesting lectures on the victims of the Holocaust, rescue in Poland and Denmark, and Jewish resistance. His breadth of understanding and clear instructional style provided a solid foundation for our work. Dr. Meineke would serve as a resource throughout the project, providing lectures at the Professional Development Institute for Teachers, recommending readings for the dancers and volunteers, and answering questions by phone.

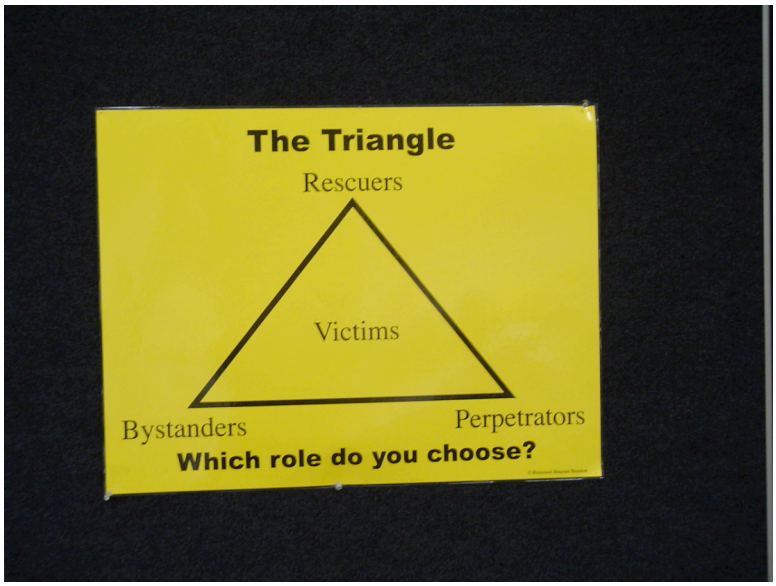

Illustration 19: The triangle used at Holocaust Museum Houston. Photograph by Mary Lee Webeck.

Another useful experience during the Warren Fellowship was the Triangle organizer they developed to reinforce the roles people took during the Holocaust. They ask students to consider what role they choose: perpetrator, rescuer or bystander. For many, the framing of the bystander as a position of choice becomes a transformational learning moment. Cookie Ruiz said:

> The triangle is one of the strongest pieces I carry with me, the idea that we choose the bystander role. That was probably the biggest take away. I think I had lived a lot of my life thinking we just opted out. I never saw that as a choice. What happens if we are more courageous in our lives? (Interview December 2006).

The triangle became an effective way to communicate the problem of turning a blind eye. As Tom Meredith often said, "Choosing not to act is an act" (in conversation, 2005). We included the graphic in the learning guide and it has since been incorporated into subsequent projects at Ballet Austin.

The Warren Fellowship provided an opportunity to meet and get to know many survivors. Each day of the fellowship included both formal and informal interactions with members of the survivor community in small group interactions and in whole group talks. This intense interaction reinforced the variety of experiences and responses to those experiences within the survivor community. As dancer Allyson Paino suggested, "there are so many different stories. Every survivor's story is different like a snowflake. That was new to me" (Interview, April 2005). Hearing multiple stories provided us an opportunity to hear the contextual subtleties of age, country, class and period of the war within their testimonies. Not that increased exposure to survivor testimony made me less engaged emotionally, but allowed me to engage with more fully with my understandings. This was amplified by the learning context framed by the museum. In this way, some barriers were removed in our exchanges with survivors. They could tell stories of tragic and intensely personal proportion. We could ask about them. The rules of polite interactions among relative strangers were suspended in this space.

The Warren Fellowship concluded with a ceremony in which the fellows offered a tribute to Naomi. As "artistic fellows," the pressure to perform seemed heightened. The challenge of the exercise was not in the representation, the challenge was in the isolation of material. So much of the information and stories we heard would make powerful tributes. I created a minimal pencil drawing inspired by a story Naomi told of returning to Auschwitz with her family in 2000. She said she cried the entire car ride from Krakow, but when she got to the gates surrounded by her family the tears stopped. She had left the camp alone and returned 15 strong. She said, "I beat Hitler. He tried to kill me but I survived" (Interview, May 2004). My drawing had one isolated figure on the lower left walking in a stooped position toward six birch trees, to represent the six million Jews

killed and the birches of Birkenau. To the right of the trees, fifteen figures walked away from the trees, standing tall. Stephen created a collage. After Stephen gave the work to Naomi, she added "And he is making me a ballet! Not many people get a ballet made for them" (May, 2004).

This liminal experience transformed me, and Stephen, in three ways. First, the intensive study of Holocaust history with an eminent historian provided exceptional grounding in Holocaust content. The luxury of being separate and apart from the exigencies of work life, with most of our basic needs being well attended to, allowed us to concentrate in non-typical ways. Secondly, the opportunity to experience representational practices of the Holocaust through the design of the museum exhibition and our own attempts at tributes seemed a valuable opportunity. The examination of these metaphoric representations sensitized us to the ways in which the camps we were to visit in Eastern Europe addressed similar issues. Finally, the Holocaust museum context created a liminal space in which we could engage with survivors in ways that would not be appropriate ordinarily. The anomalous place of a Holocaust Museum created a space in which senses were heightened and rules were suspended.

Visiting the Camps: Liminal Spaces Between Past and Present

One month later in June 2004, Stephen, Mary Lee and I embarked on a two-week trip to Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic. Sherry was to attend the trip with us, but her father's illness prevented her from traveling. Since Stephen and I funded our own trips, we met the group in Berlin. The group included high school and college teachers, some of their family members, a police officer and a Christian minister and his wife. The group varied in their knowledge of the Holocaust and their motivations for attending the

trip. Our guide, Bogden, was a proud Polish man in his sixties, who was knowledgeable about the Holocaust, but more knowledgeable about the sites of Poland.

The first afternoon included a site seeing tour of Berlin, including the Reichstag Parliament Building and a visit to the Brandenburg Gate. That evening Stephen and I took a little walk in the neighborhood of our hotel, situated in what we might call a transitional neighborhood in the States. We were surprised to see a swastika among the graffiti in the park. We told ourselves we were looking for these kinds of images.

Sachsenhaussen

Illustration 20: The gate at Sachsenhaussen concentration camp. Photograph by Mary Lee Webeck.

The next day we drove to Oranienburg, a former East German village thirty minutes outside of Berlin, to visit the Sachsenhaussen concentration camp. The sensation of touching the gate bearing the iconic phrase “Arbeit Macht Frei” changes you -- at least it changed me. I felt a rush of expectations as I stepped into the camp. Every iconic

image, every story I had heard, every movie sound track flooded into my imagination, tropes flying everywhere.

Sachsenhaussen was among the first camps established, primarily for political prisoners, dissidents, Jehovah's Witnesses, homosexuals, and Jews. Thousands of men were brought here in November 1938 in the hours following Kristallnacht. It was a disturbing site where the unwelcome voices resonant in German society were silenced.

This camp was built as a model for work camp design. The triangular shape provided an efficient form for improved surveillance, with the barracks radiating out from a single point. As you enter the camp today, you encounter a semi-circular brick wall with wooden inserts in the shape of a shelter. (See Illustration 21). This wall memorializes the victims of the camp. Each wooden insert represents a barrack that has long since been destroyed.

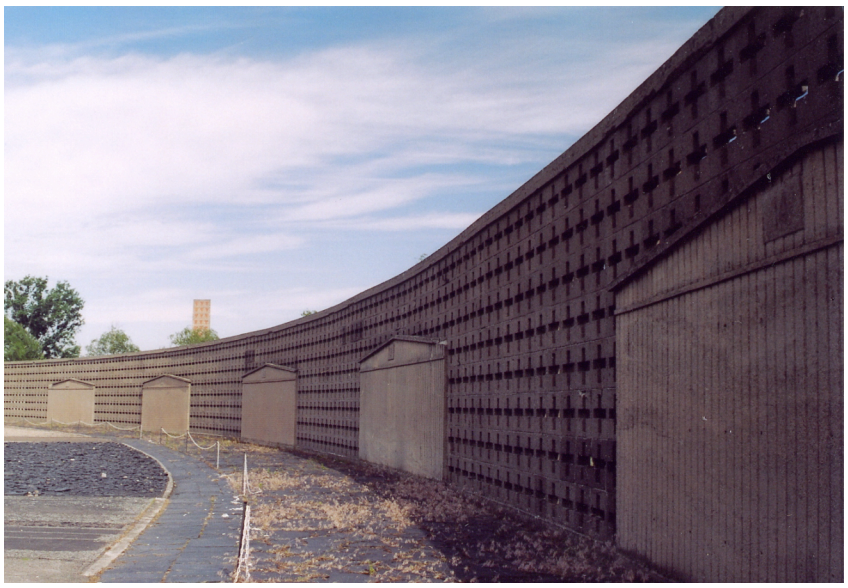

Illustration 21: Memorial wall at Sachsenhaussen Camp. Photograph by author.

The memorial wall disrupts the intended design of the camp. The wall inhibits the viewer's surveillance capacity. You can no longer see, from one panoptic space, the movement between barracks. I wrote in my journal:

> The effect of the wall obstructing the surveilling gaze was a direct affront to the camp's original design intent. The new memorialized design created a protected space for the grave markers representing the barracks. Behind the wall the flowers were growing and the space was serene (Hasty, Journal, 2005).

In this way, the memorial wall succeeds. Its commemorations, however, confuse me. The wall includes a cross-like detailing resembling a "+" sign. Does this allude to the faith of those being commemorated or numbers added together or just an architectural detail without symbolism? The monumental obelisk, built by the Soviets, features red triangles, the symbol the Nazi's required Communists to wear. At this moment I better understand that memorialization was not neutral. Neither are reactions to memorialization. Memorials make visible, in their way, the loss of people. Memorials can also make the loss of people invisible by their exclusion.

Where was the memorialization for the gays? The replica barracks had been terrorized with a pipe bomb just prior to a visit from the Prime Minister of Israel. The charred interior was left as a reminder of the anti-Semitism that still exists. The lack of memorialization to the homosexuals suggested that homophobia too still exists. Elliot Eisner's notion of the null curriculum seems fully at play in this pedagogical space. Volumes were expressed by the void. In this way, the wall took on an ironic reading for me. Rather than only shielding the victim from the gaze of the penopticon, the memorial wall also served as a metaphor for the capacity to erase victim's experiences from the public memory. Standing in the fields of wildflowers, the East German approach to camp

preservation, my search for the missing memorial to the homosexuals quickly became a search for all that was missing or silenced in this story. Even voids have magnitudes.

Illustration 22: Libeskind's Jewish Museum exterior in Berlin. Photograph by author.

Jewish Museum in Berlin

Back in Berlin, Daniel Libeskind's Jewish Museum made material the power of the void(s) I felt. Libeskind writes about his design:

> The task of building a Jewish Museum in Berlin… in all its ethical depth requires the incorporation of the void of Berlin back into itself, in order to disclose how the past continues to affect the present and to reveal how a hopeful horizon can be opened through the aporias of time (Schneider, 2004, p. 19)

The notion of the void, the calling of attention to the absence, became powerfully resonant in this space. In the Memory Void, we encountered the Manashe Kadishman installation, Fallen Leaves. As I walk on 10,000 steel faces towards the dark void at the end of the hall, the sound of heavy metal echoes loudly. The emotions this work

generated were strangely stronger than I had experienced at Sachsenhaussen. On the bus back to the hotel, Stephen, Mary Lee and I passed around several James Young articles to make sense of our experiences.

Illustration 23: Memory Void in Libeskind's Jewish Museum with the Kadishman installation, Fallen Leaves. Photograph by author.

Buchenwald

The next day we traveled to Buchenwald. It rained most of the time we were visiting the camp. Mary Lee expressed a sentiment Stephen and I shared, "Today in Buchenwald felt like my first camp experience" (Webeck, Journal, 2005). I think it felt like my first camp because Buchenwald presented the horrors of the atrocities. The camp museum showed pictures of piles of dead bodies, drawings made by victims of the camps, and artifact displays. The emotional magnitude of walking into a medical lab with a large image of a pile of bodies found at the liberation of the camp devastated me. The

contrast of the barren rock laden camp memorials against the lush hills surrounding Weimar produced a numbing effect. Animate next to inanimate.

Illustration 24: Contrasting colored rocks serve as a memorial marker outlining former barracks at Buchenwald concentration camp. Photograph by author.

Terezin

After our visit to Nuremberg, we went to Prague. We toured several synagogues in the Jewish Quarter. Exhibitions in these synagogues chronicled the experience of Jews in Prague throughout history. We drove to Terezin, the ghetto and camp the German's called Thieresenstadt. Our bus parked next to another reading SAD TOURIST. The English translation of this Czech company reinforced our feelings. After a week of Holocaust tourism, we were exhausted. We parked in between the Terezin ghetto and the Small Fortress. The memorial in front of the Small Fortress consisted of a field of red roses. Young describes that the power of these living memorials lies in the way they demand care. You must continue to care for a garden and in the tending the meaning of

the memorial remains central. In the center of this garden, stood a large fifteen-foot cross. A smaller six-foot Star of David stood in the back left corner of the memorial garden. I wondered what was being tended.

Illustration 25: Christian cross central to the Terezin memorial garden with a smaller Jewish star off to the side in the rear. Photograph by author.

I saw powerful images at the Small Fortress. The pictures I took at this camp contained more images that expressed my heavy heart than from other camps. The spare spaces with deteriorating objects conveyed a feeling of intense sadness. I wrote in my journal, "Young warns us against memorializing through objects," but the objects carried for me greater sense of authenticity than a partial memorial. The objects for me memorialized all the poor souls who came into contact with them. The memorials seemed to honor only the privileged. Back in Prague, shopping the market we were appalled at the number of puppets, carved statues and dolls featuring stereotypical images of the Jew.

Even the gift shop in our four star hotel sold a wooden carved statue of a stereotypical Jewish figure holding a pile of coins.

Illustration 26: Shower and bucket at the Small Fortress at Terezin. Photograph by author.

Plaszow

The complicated relationship between Christians and Jews became even more complicated for me as we drove to Krakow. We visited the site of the Plaszow concentration camp featured in the movie *Schindler's List*. Only a memorial existed on the camp site. The dramatic sculpture depicts five figures standing in a line with a gash across their chests. There is a powerful metaphor in the sad faces with a slash through

their hearts. The memorial's meaning is complicated for me by the cross-shaped planters lining the long footpath to the monument. On the other side of the monument hill, there is a small marker to the Jewish victims. The centrality of anti-Semitism to the Holocaust and its enduring impacts became an important understanding.

Illustration 27: Cross-shaped planters lining the path to the Plaszow monument. Photograph by author.

Auschwitz and Birkenau

Next, our tour guide scheduled a four-hour visit to the Auschwitz and Birkenau Death Camps. Mary Lee, Stephen and I hired a driver to take us to Oswiecim, separate from the group, in order to spend more time at these camps. The experience of these camps is indescribable.

Auschwitz provided the most detailed historical content. Each brick building in the camp focused on a particular dimension of the Holocaust. Several buildings focused on national perspectives, and several buildings focused on thematic issues like medicine.

Learning in this environment was profound. The combination of aesthetic-based and text-based information helped me understand. Seeing the story repeated through the national perspective provided a nuance to my learning.

Several buildings included "proof of the atrocities" displaying large cases filled with personal effects like shoes, suitcases, and hair. I skipped many rooms. I could not stay in the room of prosthetic limbs. There existed a degree of dramatic devices in the display. Entering the front gate (See Illustration 28) a sign bearing a skull and cross bone added to the dramatic intent, probably not necessary as you walked under the iconic "Arbeit macht frei" sign welded into the gate. These dramatic symbols contrasted with the camp architecture that resembled a small college campus with uniform three story red brick buildings (See Illustration 29).

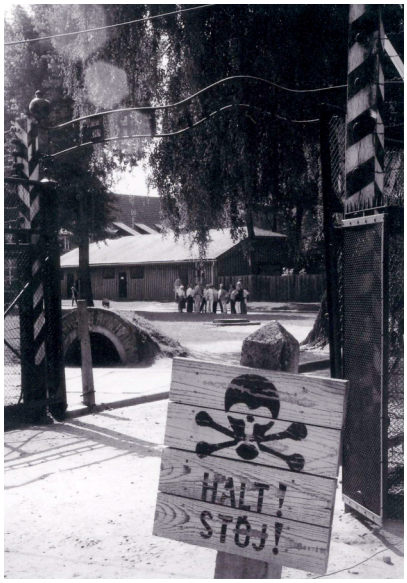

Illustration 28 and 29: Contrasting images from the Auschwitz Concentration Camp. Photograph by author.

The opportunity to enter a gas chamber, however, transcended drama. The rush of feelings overwhelmed me. By the time we entered Auschwitz II, or Birkenau, the feelings of mourning clouded everything. I wrote later on the bus:

> What does it mean to learn in this place? My experience in the camps has jumped back and forth between memorialization and museum. As I go through the camps I jump back and forth between the memories and details of the lost and approaching these camps as both sites of horror and sites of reverence. Time is meaningless in the sense that the spaces ask you to consider before, during and after the moment simultaneously. Vibrant lives, prison lives and death are simultaneously evoked (Journal 2004).

These places created a dissonance in me as I jumped between my learning self in the museum and my mourning self in the memorial. The tour guide wanted me to turn left to see this feature or that feature, and I just wanted to be silent, to feel the space, and mourn. We were in a liminal space between a memorial and a museum and deference to one caused dissonance with the other. I began thinking again about what it means to learn in these anomalous places of learning. I wrote in my journal:

> Stephen and I talked last night about what it would be like to be able to imagine what standing in a roll call might feel like, not in a "simulation" way but in a "bodies in space" way. It seemed for him, what you could learn here [the camps] was a way of being, of course informed by the details of the life but more than a collection of "namings" and a collection of learning objects, but rather a subjectivity (Journal, 2004).

Ellsworth (2005) describes this sense as the body in relation to the space. Birkenau's immense size allowed us to be alone. Stephen headed for the woods. I walked towards the killing centers. I was shocked at the capacity of a place so onerous to hold beauty. I cried thinking the silt at the bottom of the bucolic pond was formed by human ash. Stephen and I walked together back to the bus. We walked through the decaying remains of the barracks. The enormity of the camp provided me a better sense of what

eleven million might mean. As we reached the end of the camp, we couldn't find an exit and had to squeeze through the barbed wire fence. It was a powerful lesson, not in a "simulation" way, but in a "bodies in space" way.

Majdanek

The next camp we visited was Majdanek in Lublin, Poland. Contrasted by the professional exhibitions of Auschwitz, Majdanek looked forgotten. I worried about the preservation of the artifacts. While Auschwitz enclosed artifacts behind humidity controlled glass cases, Majdanek displayed artifacts more casually. In one barrack for example, four steel cages ran the length of the building from floor to ceiling. In the cages were shoes of victims. Due to an electrical problem, the only light in the room came from the open door. As you walked to the rear of the building the light dimmed and the smell of rotting leather grew. The sensory experience overwhelmed me. I understood in that moment something about being left to die. I carried that feeling as I walked the grounds of the camp.

Illustration 30: Shoes in barrack at Majdanek. Photograph by Mary Lee Webeck.

Treblinka

Our final camp was not scheduled. The tour guides said there was nothing to see at Treblinka. Mary Lee convinced Stephen and I that we should hire a driver to take us to the site. When people heard of our plans, the entire group wanted to join us, so we ended up taking our bus. It proved to be the perfect end for the trip. The Nazis burned Treblinka early during the war when they feared the camp would be discovered by the approaching Soviet troops. A beautiful memorial stands on the site. Large human sized stones mark the perimeter of the camp. A series of marble plinths resemble train tracks leading to a platform area. In a circle of trees, seemingly thousands of rock fragments, in a scale that echoes the range of human sizes throughout life, create an image similar to the old Jewish Cemeteries. Many of the rocks bear inscribed names of towns suffering loss or destruction during the Holocaust. It was raining. We said the Kaddish. There was no confusion here; this was a place to memorialize.

Israel Trip: Complications of Tolerance

I almost didn't make it to Israel. I lost my passport in the Dallas airport and spent 24 hours retrieving it and getting on another flight. When I arrived, Stephen picked me up from the airport after having spent the day with the founder of the Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company, Yehudit Arno. A survivor, she told Stephen how she would dance in the camp to entertain those around her. After liberation, she immigrated to Israel and began studying modern dance, becoming a professional dancer and choreographer. In 1967, she formed the Kibbutz Contemporary Dance Company. She recounted the works on the Holocaust she had seen and showed him tapes of the work she created. The company presented a performance for Stephen.

Although we saw many sites throughout Israel, visiting Yad Vashem was the most powerful. The new Moshe Safdie Museum was under construction, and the old museum looked its age. The International school allowed Stephen and I to attend several days of classes and we had the opportunity to spend a lot of time with the memorial spaces. We had learned about the memorial to the children, also designed by Safdie during our meeting with Curtis Meadows. It might be the perfect memorial. With the reflected light of one candle on multiple mirrors, one begins to understand the dimensions of possibility. Each light reflection came to represent another child, or another dream, or another possibility. The illusion suspends that thought unto infinity. We visited the space many times, waiting in the back until we were alone, to look and listen, and think about possibilities.

We visited the Museum on the Seam, the organizers of the Coexistence Exhibit. Their museum is located in a former army bunker that retains scars from the violence it endured. The exhibition of politically charged art about the nature of war moved us both.

I wanted to love Israel, but it holds a lot of contradictions. For me it was a tense place, obvious when a neighboring country suggests your country does not deserve to exist, but in subtle ways too. When I returned to Israel in the summer of 2005, I encountered homophobic bigotry from an orthodox religious group that ended in violence. The constant yelling during a Pride parade hurt. Mary Lee reported a man climbing a flagpole and ripping down a rainbow flag. A stabbing occurred thirty feet from where I stood during the parade. When our study group traveled, we were always accompanied by armed security. The role of hate in our lives became material.

EDUCATION AMPLIFIES THE ARTISTIC PROCESS: AN ORGANIZATION PREPARES

Illustration 31: Ballet Austin studies at Holocaust Museum Houston. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

The *Light Project* asked many things of Ballet Austin. Ruiz, Mills and Dancer Allyson Paino reported changes in their practice during this project (Interview 2005, 2006, 2007). Mills recognized the project required that he go through an extended

learning process in order to fulfill his responsibilities to the project as a choreographer and to fulfill his responsibilities as the leader of an organization attempting this sensitive work. He would need special training to make the work and special training to talk about the work in the community. He recognized that the dancers would need more than their substantial physical skills and dance training in order to dance this work. Mills said, "I believed the dancers had to approach the work with an appropriate respect of the profoundness of the subject matter" (Mills, Interview 2006). He felt a better understanding of the Holocaust would provide the context they needed to approach the work respectfully. He asked Mary Lee and I to think about the kinds of Holocaust education learning activities we might provide for the dancers. We organized four activities. First, we arranged for the High School Holocaust Language Arts trunk from the Holocaust Museum Houston to be delivered the ballet studio in January. The trunk contained books, videos and other materials that could support a strong foundation in content. Secondly, Mary Lee and I prepared a lecture on Holocaust history. Thirdly, we organized a study trip to Holocaust Museum Houston. Finally, we arranged for the company to meet Naomi Warren and hear her testimony. While arranged for the dancers specifically, the entire staff began showing up for these events. The dancers began passing around videos on the subject. They began discussing among themselves the films they were watching and the fiction and non-fiction works they were reading. Soon I began getting calls from dancers asking if I would be interested in meeting once a week to talk more about the subject. They decided to meet after work and organize the meetings loosely on a reading from the trunk. We started each meeting talking about the book we were reading, but the conversation always took its own course. The conversation turned to a particular issue within the historical period or bigotry in contemporary

society, or the role of art. The dancers used educational practice to inform their work in ways that moved beyond typical artistic processes of dancers. It may have been sufficient to read personal testimonies and not to understand the historical particulars in order to perform their roles as dancers in the production. However the culture of the organization made that insufficient. The dancers and Stephen placed higher expectations on themselves.

Preparation began to take place throughout the organization. For example, Mills met with school-aged students taking dance classes in the Ballet Austin dance academy to discuss the creation of this work.

Illustration 32: Mills speaking with students in the Ballet Academy about *Light Project*. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Many of these students would be going to see the production and he felt it was important that they had sufficient context for the production. He used his creative process as the entry point to talk about the themes of the production. In his process, Mills collects piles

of images from magazines and newspapers. He finds inspiration in fashion magazines, advertisements and art journals. Sometimes he is interested in the shapes, colors, tones, and sometimes he is interested in the narrative of the image. Often when he approaches a new work, he sifts through these images again to find resonance. For the *Light Project,* Mills pulled a dozen or so images from this collection and photographs from our trip to Eastern Europe and pinned them to a wall in his office. These images became references for his dance making, sometimes impacting production design, or specific movement phrases, or a general sense of mood (See Illustrations 57, 60, and 67 for examples). One parent described the interactions this way:

> March 13 2005
>
> Hi Mr. Mills, I want to thank you for last night's presentation and let you know that you indeed increased awareness and conversation about intolerance. My daughter Mary Beth and her friend Kaitlin talked all the way home - we live 80 miles from Austin. Ironically, Mary Beth and Kaitlin have a school project to "Compare the Titanic with the Holocaust". I'm proud to report the girls don't see a comparison but a vast contrast. I think you opened a new awareness of how to look at things...both creatively and critically. I don't think any of us will look at magazine pictures the same way. As a mom, I appreciated how you interacted with the students, weren't condescending to them, presented the information age appropriate for the young ones and didn't "milk toast" the subject. Intolerance is a subject close to my heart. I grew up in the 60's and 70's and was pro-active with racial inequality issues. My position as a school nurse in a minority, inner-city school is a dream come true. Intolerance is a fact of life for my students but day by day we battle it and we see changes. Much babbling just to say you touched my heart and opened my daughter's eyes and awareness...your goal is coming to light.
>
> Take care and with much respect.
>
> Sherri

Mills asked the young ladies to consider their roles as bystanders in their own lives and to reconsider their responsibilities. Conversations in the boardroom changed,

too. While the organization always had a philanthropic inclination through its outreach programs, the board never envisioned itself as a community organizer. The board took a stand on social issues confronting our city by contributing money for victims of Katrina and worked towards creating a Community School. The Community School takes as its mission the reduction of all barriers that prevent any citizen of Austin with an interest in dance to pursue their goal. Programmatically, the staff continued to make a series of works grounded in social justice themes including the *Trail of Tears: Walking the Choctaw Road* and *The Monologue Project,* a multi-disciplinary project about finding personal voice during adversity. These outreach programs are enacted in local schools

During the *Light Project*, the staff, the artists, the board, and the students of the academy contributed to a reconsideration of their organizational role in the community. Ruiz said:

> All those things began to coalesce in an opportunity not only to engage our community but Stephen saw an opportunity to transform the organization internally. I think sometimes in horror that we could have done the public conversation and missed the internal one. His decision to go straight to the core of the organization has completely transformed our organization, irreversibly (Ruiz, Interview 2006).

Mills saw the opportunity to shift the organization through education:

> … this was an opportunity to do something important from a teaching standpoint while learning very profound information myself. It was as though I was being given a gift, one which I was going to have to work very hard to get, but in the end would change how I feel about the world in general but also about how I make work (Interview, 2006).

In this commitment to pursue ongoing learning experiences, both internally and externally, Mills reframed the expectation of practice in his organization. Framing the issues around larger social justice issues provided an opportunity for the organization to reframe itself conceptually, internally and externally, in civic terms.

DEVELOPING ORGANIZATIONAL AND INFRASTRUCTURE CAPACITY

Early in the project, Cookie Ruiz described her position in the partnership as "a fly on the wall" (Personal communication, 2004). Yet, others saw her position very differently. She catalyzed the operation of the project. Cookie managed the administrative functions of fundraising, PR, and the general logistics for implementing many aspects of the project.

Initially, she described her initial motivation as a "desire to do what I could do to support Stephen doing a creative piece, to be perfectly honest" (Interview, 2006). Her use of the "fly on the wall" metaphor of an observer (of another species) presents a detached representation of her role in the project. She said:

> I started into [the *Light Project*] professionally and came out of it professionally and personally. I took a leap of faith with [Stephen]. It was fairly far into the beginning stages when I began to understand this was an opportunity to truly do something – to truly matter. Something about living in a post-9/11 world, we have an increased sense of fragility of life but also the understanding that it's the time and purpose of doing something (Ruiz, Interview 2006).

As Executive Director of the ballet, she practices a servant leadership philosophy, a way of leading by working in service of the art and the artists making the art. She said in an interview in April 2005:

> I knew his desire was to do something different. I knew he wanted to use the art form to communicate and to do something different than he had done in the past. For me, not being an artist, working in support of art, I was really excited about taking a journey but didn't know the destination of the journey. Although I knew it would be different place for him. I thought it would be uncharted and thought it might be difficult (Interview 2005).

The organizational support and networking capacity required to bring together 13 organizations and raise $250,000 in a short period of time speaks to the difficulty of the challenges she faced.

Developing Capacity by Activating Networks

The capacity building portion of the *Light Project* began in earnest on September 15, 2004. Cookie, Stephen, Amy and Kirk Rudy and I met for lunch to discuss ways to move forward. During that meeting, Kirk committed to catalyzing his network. He suggested we approach Mayor Will Wynn, Judy Yudof, the wife of the Chancellor of the UT System and the President of the Conservative Movement of Judaism, Gus Garcia, former Mayor pro-tem, and Lucy Johnson Turpin to provide stewardship as an advisory council. He began to set up a series of meetings. On October 4, 2004, he invited Judy Yudof, Alan Potash, the head of the Austin area Anti-Defamation League (ADL), and others to hear a presentation of the project. Yudof agrees to serve as a co-chair. She implied she understood the weight of her name in the community and was happy to lend her support to the project. She also reminded Kirk she was chairing a capital campaign for the Conservative Center in Jerusalem, hinting at the practice of reciprocal fundraising. The following week, we met with Tom Meredith, former CFO of Dell and a community philanthropist, and Lowell Leberman, a business leader and former UT Regent. During the meeting, Tom agreed to serve as a co-chair on the condition that he could be an active member. Lowell agreed to serve on the advisory council. The same week, Alan requested we visit the ADL office in Houston to discuss the partnership possibilities. We met with the senior staff at the ADL on October 5th, 2004.

Kirk asked Eddie Safady, local bank President, to invite Bettie Sue Flowers, the Executive Director of the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library and Museum to join our work. During that lunch, Bettie Sue agreed to serve on the Executive Steering Committee and commit her organization to the partnership to provide space for lectures. She described the role of the Holocaust in one of her book chapters and recounted stories

of then Senator Johnson's efforts to help Jews immigrate during the war. Eddie agreed to help secure Bill Moyers for our town hall meeting. Kirk asked his father to help ask Fred Zeidman, the President's appointment to chair the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum, to serve on our advisory board. We were able to announce his acceptance at the luncheon with Dr. Flowers. The following day, Stephen and I made a conference call to ask Dr. Forgione, Superintendent of the Austin Independent School District, to join Tom Meredith and Judy Yudof as tri-chairs. He agreed pending approval from his board chair.

In forty-five days, we had secured three high profile leaders as tri-chairs and assembled am advisory board with national credentials. We had secured partnerships with seven organizations with critical links into the community. Tom Meredith encouraged us to think big, approaching Governor Perry and former Governor Ann Richards to be honorary chairs. UT Regent James Huffines secured the Governor on behalf of the project on December 12, 2004 and Gov. Richards agreed on December 22, 2004.

Cookie framed the relative ease with which we assembled these individuals this way:

> We brought together thirteen groups. We need to stand as buoys on these topics. The issue was to just encourage people not to stand by – and there is a lot of work to be done in that regard. People want to reach to that higher stage of action… and for three or four months we gave them a variety of ways, to stand up, or to be involved, to sign their name or to take action. And that felt universally good (Ruiz, Interview, 2005).

In short period of time, we organized the following group of individuals to serve as project leaders (See Figure 8):

Light / The Holocaust & Humanity Project

COMMITTEE MEMBER	*AFFILIATION*
Honorary Chairs	
Rick Perry	Governor of Texas
The Honorable Ann Richards	Former Governor of Texas
Project Co-Chairs	
Pascal D. Forgione, Jr.	Superintendent, Austin Independent School District
Tom Meredith	Partner, Meritage Capital
Judy Yudof	President, International Movement of Conservative Judaism
Executive Steering Committee	
Dr. Betty Sue Flowers	Director, LBJ Library and Museum
Abe Foxman	President, National Anti-Defamation League
James Huffines	Chairman, UT System Board of Regents
Mañuel Justiz	School of Education Dean, The University of Texas at Austin
Lowell Lebermann	Chairman/CEO, Centex Beverage
Bernard Rapoport	President, The Bernard and Audre Rapoport Foundation
Amy and Kirk Rudy	Community Activists
Lily Saad	Regional Board Member, Anti-Defamation League
Evan Smith	Editor, Texas Monthly
Bill Stotesberry	Board Member, KLRU
Eileen Weisman	Chairperson, Holocaust Museum Houston
Anne Elizabeth and Will Wynn	Community Leader, Mayor of Austin
Fred Zeidman	Chairman, The United States Holocaust Memorial Council
Advisory Committee	
Bobby Epstein	Community Activist
John Fitzpatrick	Trustee, Austin Independent School District
Brent Hasty	Doctoral Candidate, The University of Texas at Austin
Mark Lit	President/CEO, Jewish Community Association of Austin
Stephen Mills	Artistic Director, Ballet Austin
Cookie Ruiz	Executive Director, Ballet Austin
Eddie Safady	Chairman - Austin Area, Prosperity Bank
Eugene Sepulveda	Board Member, Austin Community Development Corporation
Helen Warren Spector	The Naomi and Martin Warren Family Foundation
Ingrid Taylor	Vice President, AISD School Board
Steven Tomlinson	Board Member, St. Stephens Episcopal Church
Benjamin Warren	The Naomi and Martin Warren Family Foundation
Naomi Warren	The Naomi and Martin Warren Family Foundation
Dr. Mary Lee Webeck	Professor of The College of Education, The University of Texas at Austin

Figure 8: The *Light Project* Leadership

During this organizational development period from September 2004 to February 2005, we continued to raise funds. We operated with a $250,000 budget for the *Light Project*. We arranged the budget so that unfunded activities could be cancelled. A network analysis demonstrates the fundraising operations (See Figure 9). In this graphic, arrows represent the individual or organization taking responsibility for the fundraising request. Two arrows represent a joint request. As you can see, Kirk Rudy, Ballet Austin and Tom Meredith served as the primary fundraisers in this Project, with Kirk Rudy providing the greatest leadership.

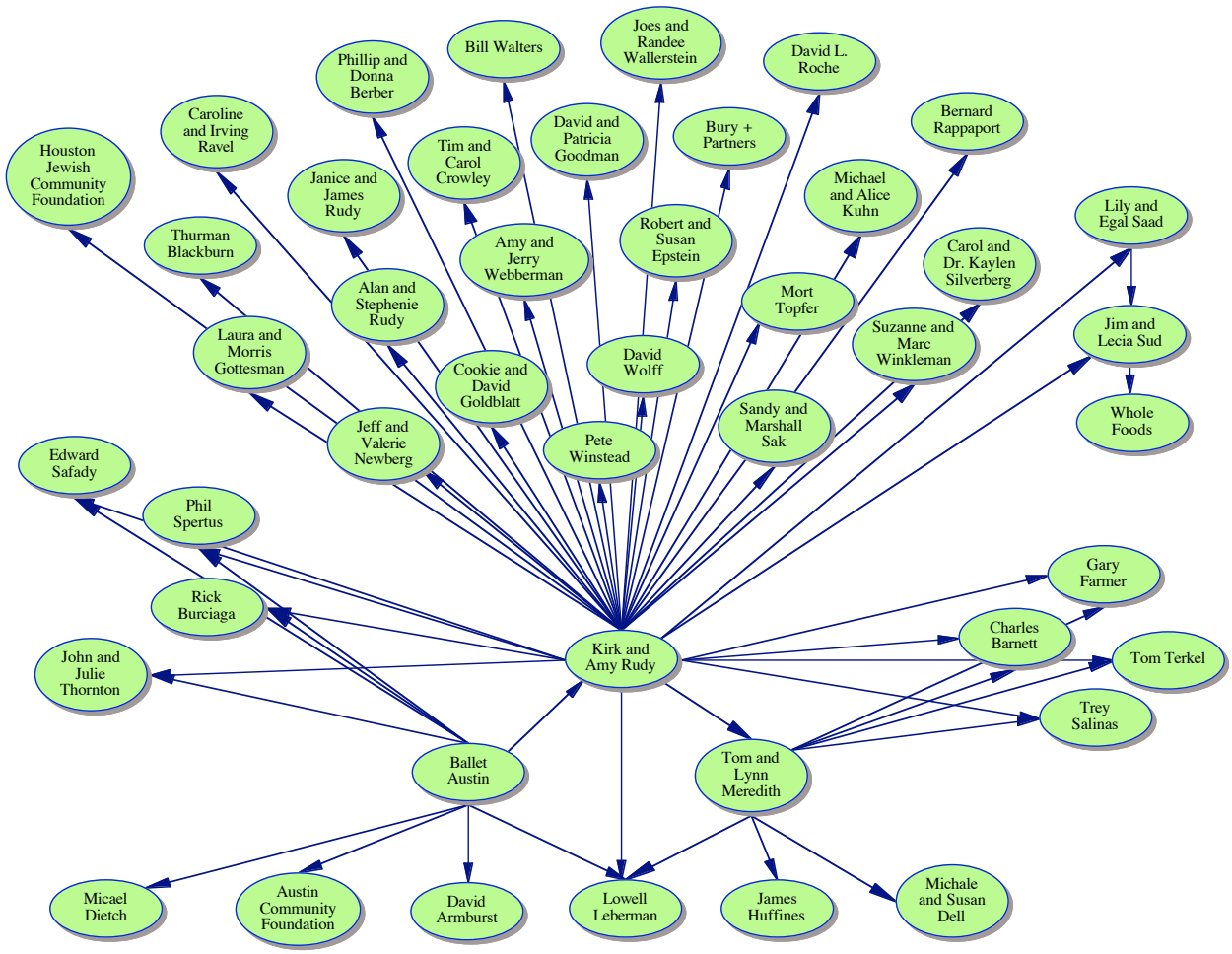

Figure 9: Network analysis of contributors to the *Light Project*.

Chapter Six: Implementation of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*

The *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* marked its beginning with a press conference on January 25, 2005. During the press conference, Cookie Ruiz, Kirk Rudy and Tom Meredith announced the series of *Light Project* activities that would occur between February 16 and April 19, 2005. Mayor Will Wynn, Representative Mark Strama and Representative Patrick Rose were among the local and state leaders who signed the pledge to spend the next two months examining our responsibility when confronted with bigotry and hate.

This event marked the beginning of the Implementation Phase of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.

THE LECTURE SERIES

Illustration 33: James Young, Stephen Mills and Robert Abzug during public lecture. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

The *Light Project* Public Lecture Series developed emergently. In programming the lectures, we attempted to provide amplification of the three project disciplines: art, education and civic dialogue. In the segment devoted to art, we wanted to address Holocaust representation in and through the arts, specifically dance. In education, we wanted to address Holocaust history. With civic dialogue, we originally wanted to address the mechanics of civic dialogue but soon broadened our scope to illicit public dialogue through an exploration of a contemporary issue. Additionally, we hoped to include local speakers and at least one nationally recognized figure.

Our original list included Paul Shapiro, Walter Parker, Bill Rawlins and Elliot Eisner. Our very short list of nationally recognized figures listed only Elie Wiesel. Later, inspired by Tom Meredith's enthusiastic recommendation, we added Samantha Power, Pulitzer Prize winning author of *A Problem from Hell*: *America in the Age of Genocide*.

Mary Lee and I began meeting with Holocaust scholars within the University community including Robert Abzug, David Crew, and Pascale Bos. We never met Ian Hamilton. In addition to inviting each scholar to participate in the *Light Project*, we asked them to recommend potential speakers and books appropriate for both our committee and the general public. These scholars provided a foundation of expertise from which we could build our series.

When thinking about representation, Mary Lee suggested James Young. The idea was both obvious and inspired. Young's work had advanced our own thinking on Holocaust representation and memorialization in our early and ongoing academic writing and presentations. I often brought his ideas to my discussions with Stephen, giving him an occasional chapter to read. We realized inviting Young would provide two functions: expand the broader public's awareness of Holocaust representation issues, and provide a

crash course on representation for the artists. Mary Lee called him without introduction, and after hearing about the nature of the project, particularly the inclusion of dance representations, he accepted. We invited Dr. Abzug and Stephen Mills to join him in the lecture scheduled on February 16th, titled: *Representing the Holocaust: Memory, Memorial and Time*.

Young's lecture expanded several ideas presented in his books, *At Memory's Edge: After Images of the Holocaust in Contemporary Art and Architecture* (2000), and *The Texture of Memory* (1993) by using his personal experiences serving on the selection committees for the World Trade Center Site Memorial in New York and the Memorial to the Murdered Jews of Europe in Berlin. Most importantly he discussed the idea of the void, quite literally an empty space, in memorialization. As described earlier, Young suggested the void created a monument logic that sought not to fill the loss of the murdered but instead to cause the viewer to acknowledge the loss, through the presence of absence. He provided several other examples of memorial logic including the anti-monument, which destroys itself or the living monument requiring constant care. Abzug explicated examples of Holocaust music and literature focusing on Steve Reich's (1988) symphony, "Different Trains" and Jonathon Safaran Fors (2003) novel, *Everything is Illuminated*. Mills discussed his process of creating this work focusing on the ways in which his trip to the camps of Eastern Europe impacting his visual thinking.

While our first lecture was confirmed by late October, our second and third lectures solidified less quickly. While we had sufficient local speakers to construct engaging lectures, we felt the need to bring speakers our city would not typically have access to hearing. Our strategy to commit a nationally prominent speaker first, then compose a complimentary third lecture, proved unwise. Time was running out. We could

secure either Wiesel or Power through booking agents at a cost of $50,000. Meredith attempted to secure either former President Bill Clinton or Senator Joe Lieberman. He mentioned the project to Clinton at the opening of the Clinton Presidential Library in Arkansas. During a committee meeting on December 1, 2004, Lily Saad reported calling Wiesel about speaking at a lecture series, confirming his availability March 31st. Lily also asked Abe Foxman, survivor and head of the Anti-Defamation League to speak. On December 14, 2004, Kirk informed the team the Jewish Community Association of Austin had secured Elie Wiesel to speak in Austin and hoped the *Light Project* could provide support through our partnership. We agreed to share expenses including arranging for private air transportation for Mr. Wiesel to and from Austin plus his fee. Several local philanthropists agreed to loan the use of their planes.

Illustration 34: Gov. Rick Perry introduces Elie Wiesel at lecture. Photograph by Hannah Neal

On March 31st, we presented *An Evening with Elie Wiesel*. Upon his arrival in Austin, Wiesel met with middle school students from the Jewish Academy, attended a dinner for 62 top donors, and presented a talk to 3000 people at Bass Concert hall. Fred Zeidman, the chairman of the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum introduced Governor Perry who in turn introduced Mr. Wiesel (See Illustration 36). Mr. Wiesel used a combination of parables and personal history to encourage the audience to take action. He said "When people suffer, don't sleep" (Lecture, March 2005). During his speech he referenced the upcoming ballet. In the first few words of his remarks, he said:

> I am here with some trepidation because of what some of you devotedly, passionately, have decided to do with communicating what we all went through in ballet. I say trepidation because maybe it is a language we have not explored yet. We have difficulties communicating the unspeakable. Difficulties because we have not found the words… maybe there are no words. Others have tried with music… still others have tried painting… still others have tried poetry, although the famous Adorno said to write poetry after the holocaust is barbaric…. Others have written chronicles… if they have the courage to write we must have the courage to read. Now we have a new experiment, ballet. If I were a choreographer, I would imagine the greatest dancer who would be sitting motionless to contain all his talent, all his fervor and not to release it (Wiesel, March 2005).

Sitting next to Stephen, I looked to see his reaction. He seemed unphased. When I asked Mills later what was going through his mind, he laughed saying, "I felt some trepidation" but wanted to wait for Mr. Wiesel to finish his thought (Interview 2007). In the end, Mills felt his production was sympathetic to the ideas Mr. Wiesel expressed.

Illustration 35: Mary Lee Webeck at public lecture. Photograph by Hannah Neal

The third lecture to be designed emerged through a combination of expediency and individual requests. Several people, particular through the ballet, were concerned with how they might include their children in the program and how they might be more effective fostering conversations. Subsequently we produced a lecture *Talking with Young People about the Holocaust* featuring Dr. Pascale Bos and Dr. Mary Lee Webeck. Each brought their capacities as teachers to a discussion of our capacity to understand the topic. Dr. Bos focused on the ways in which the focus on the Holocaust in America might serve as a shield for dealing with more charged, and unresolved, topics like slavery and race relations. Dr. Webeck focused on the literature of the period and the role of teachers in fostering a hostile environment against the Jews. Forty people attended the lecture held in the atrium at the Lyndon Baines Johnson Presidential Library Museum.

THE PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE FOR TEACHERS

Illustration 36: Teachers attending the Professional Development Institute. Photographer Hannah Neal.

The Professional Development Institute for Teachers engaged 75 teachers for two full days, February 23-24, 2004 at the Thompson Conference Center. We organized the Institute around three main strands: increasing Holocaust content knowledge, providing instructional theory and resources, and linking the historical study to contemporary issues.

In designing the Institute, Mary Lee and I wanted Will Meinecke to speak. His engaging style, use of images, and deep understanding of the historical period make his lectures powerful learning experiences. We asked him to repeat his lectures from the Warren Fellowship including: *An Overview of the Holocaust*, *The Holocaust and the Victims of Nazi Persecution*, and *Resistance*.

We invited Dr. Sam Totten for several reasons. As a leading scholar in Holocaust education he provided a rich resource for teachers on pedagogical issues. He complimented Will's historical treatment by focusing on Holocaust literature. Totten also provided a link to contemporary issues. His recent writing and research experiences focus on contemporary genocides in Africa. We asked Dr. Totten to deliver lectures on: *Holocaust Education: Issues and Approaches*, *Teaching Holocaust Literature: Using Poetry to Get at Key Historical Issues*, and *Century of Genocide and Beyond*.

To address instructional strategies beyond the plenary sessions, we included small group breakout sessions focused on instruction. Dr.'s Totten, Webeck, and Shiring conducted workshops on a variety of teaching topics. We provided information on resource programs including Holocaust Museum Houston's Curriculum Trunk Program and the Anti-Defamation League's No Place for Hate program. We also provided a variety of print materials for teachers. In addition to a notebook with selected readings, we provided each participant a bag of teaching resources including: USHMM's *Teaching about the Holocaust* (2001), Yad Vashem's *How is it Humanly Possible* (2002) and, *The Children of Willesden Lane* (2002). We liked the idea of supplying teachers with materials written by the two largest institutions producing teaching materials on the Holocaust.

Illustration 37: Survivor Max Brenner shares his art with teachers. Photograph Hannah Neal.

We asked Max Brenner, a survivor, to give his testimony to the teachers (See Illustration 39). Stephen and I met Max on our trip to Israel. He brought photographs of his painting in order to show them to the staff at Yad Vashem in the hopes that he might donate them to their collection. His artwork served as a way for Max to let people know about his Holocaust past. We invited Max to share the paintings of his Holocaust experience with the teachers at the Institute. We wanted to add another aesthetic dimension to our programming. We also felt the paintings allowed Max a degree of protection in revealing his painful past. I worried about what pain I might be inflicting on Max by asking him to share such horrible memories. We believed the paintings created a mediating device that would be a more ethical way of framing his testimony.

At the end of the Professional Development Institute, we asked the participants to sign our banner pledging to answer the three questions:

- How are the issues of the Holocaust relevant in our community today?
- What is our responsibility when confronted with acts of bigotry and hate?

- What actions can we take to promote understanding in our community?

Evaluations of the Institute were generally positive. Based on interest in the Institute, we recently held a second two-day Holocaust Education Professional Development Institute.

EDUCATIONAL MATERIALS

Illustration 38: *Footnotes* Educational guide for the *Light Project*.

The primary educational materials took the form of a sixteen-page document called *Footnotes*. The *Footnotes* learning guides had been used to accompany Ballet Austin Productions since 2001 when, as Chair of the Educational Advisory Committee, I challenged the organization to create study guides for families in attendance. Using the *Cuesheets* model developed by the Kennedy Center, Ballet Austin began creating eight-

page learning guides to accompany most performances. Brenda Blue and Lori Braun, two sisters, volunteered to write and layout the guides.

For the *Light Project Footnotes*, we determined Mary Lee and I would take primary responsibility for content development, with Brenda contributing targeted articles and serving as the publications editor. During our first meeting, we drafted a basic storyboard outlining the component elements. Unfortunately, the original storyboards have been lost. With or without the original cards, the process of making the work was iterative and collaborative.

Interestingly, this task of writing instructional content, which seems like it should have been easy for two academically minded writers, proved quite difficult. We entered into the task with a certain trepidation that echoed our concerns early in the project. We understood the risk involved with designing print materials, particularly the tensions of communicating complex issues in a limited space. Interpretations of words and images would be highly scrutinized. The brevity of the print piece forced us to be very careful about what was said and not said, who was represented and not represented, and what was shown and not shown. We understood that for some, this piece would be the only opportunity to encounter historical content. Readers with a strong foundation in the Holocaust would seek challenges, while others just beginning their Holocaust inquiries must not be overwhelmed. Not only would the piece be responsible for delivering content information, we also understood that the ideas in this piece would guide how some people engaged with the work. With that in mind, we came to agreement that the guide would contain: rich historical material about the Holocaust; information about the project generally and the ballet specifically; and would include a broader discussion of historical and contemporary genocides. As a practical matter, the piece needed to be published in

four-page increments. Our fixed budget framed a negotiation between producing a greater quantity of twelve-page guides or a lesser quantity of sixteen page guides: distribution vs. depth. Several attempts to layout the content in aesthetically pleasing, image-based ways that were not too text-heavy, made it clear that the document required sixteen pages to be successful in delivering the content in an aesthetically agreeable way.

The final layout followed the general structure outlined in our original storyboards. The first page provided an overview of the project including our mission, a list of our partners, and a calendar of the remaining events. Five strong images represented each major component of the project: the ballet, the art exhibit, the professional development for teachers, the lecture series and the community dialogues.

The second page answers the need for the project. The primary visuals include two images from the Coexistence Exhibit and the project's three organizing questions displayed using various shades of color. The text opens with the Majdanek Memorial quote, "Let our fate be your warning" carved in Hebrew in a towering memorial (See Illustration 41). The Footnote text moves the reader from "an opportunity to examine an extreme case of human's capacity for inhumanity so that we may avoid it" to our own "personal responsibilities" (p. 3). This page offers the three framing questions of the project and asks the reader to "engage in honest dialogue, listen with a generosity of spirit and search for common ground" (p. 3). We assumed the reader would recognize intolerance in our world, preferring to focus this space on describing how reflection on the Holocaust might lead to reflection about our personal responsibility when we encounter acts of bigotry and hate.

Illustration 39: Majdanek Memorial reads, “Let our fate be your warning” in Hebrew. Photograph by author.

We dedicated two pages to an overview of Holocaust history. Condensing the complex history of the Holocaust to 500 words challenged us immensely. We began with the history overviews created by museums including USHMM and Yad Vashem. We included a timeline running in the footer of the document to augment the historical narrative. Two pages followed this section, highlighting different group of victims of the Nazis. We chose to highlight several aspects of the Nazi agenda to help the reader grasp the ways in which the National Socialists worked against their victim: Anti-Semitism, a quest for racial purity, a struggle for European land and power, and Nazi ideologies.

Four pages covered the ballet and issues of representation. In the ballet section, we attempted to provide both a conceptual outline of the ballet and insights into the

creative process. At the time of press, the ballet remained unfinished. We focused on the main themes, the music and some preliminary design renderings.

We felt it was important to dedicate two pages to other genocides. By dedicating as much space to this issue as we had to the history of the Holocaust we were hoping to send an important message to our reader. In addition to historical information about genocides, we included practical information for people to take action to express their concerns. Our final two pages presented strategies for talking about the Holocaust and hate with young people as well as resource ideas for learning more about the issues covered in the guide.

The back page of the guide, listing the sponsors of the project, also served as a call to action. We continued the timeline used throughout the guide to create a sense of immediacy of the need for each reader to consider their actions and make responsible choices.

Illustration 40: Final page of *Footnotes* for *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.

Education Impacting Art; Art Impacting Education

Crafting the *Footnotes* document made me even more aware of our language use around this subject. The literature is filled with conversations about appropriateness and word choice, including debates about using the term Shoah or Holocaust, or describing the deaths of the victims as murders or killings (See Bauer, 2002). Words mattered in the Holocaust. The Nazis manipulated the meanings of words to obfuscate their actions. "Special treatment" and "make harmless" became official terms to describe murder. We included a brief discussion of this topic in the guide. Subsequently, it shocked me how frequently we used words that had a negative resonance in this context. For example, the

front page of early drafts of the *Footnotes* included a table of contents titled: What's inside? The first entry read "Collaborators, pages 2-3." Calling oneself a collaborator, a term referring to those who actively supported the Nazi government, seemed particularly inappropriate in the context of a Holocaust project. We struggled to find a word that acknowledged the partnership created for this project. We also found ourselves changing phrases that had contemporary political implications. We choose to change the phrase "democratic values" to the "values of democracy" in order to ameliorate some of the divisiveness between the red and the blue.

Language usage became a constant vigil. For example the Public Relations firm wrote the copy for the press conference speeches including the following introduction of the project:

> We have asked you all here today to officially kick off *Light/The Holocaust & Humanity Project*. *(pause)*
>
> *Light/The Holocaust & Humanity Project*, our goal is to ignite a community dialogue about the promotion of tolerance and protection of human rights against bigotry and hate.

The use of the word ignite seemed an appropriately colorful illusion within the context of a project titled Light, but in the context of the Holocaust proved offensive. Unaware of either the roots of the word Holocaust as a "burnt offering" or the implications of associating light with fire, the PR firm was mortified.

Assurances of Images

Upon reflection, I think we could have provided more assurances through the images we included in the *Footnotes*. The iconic status of the Holocaust carries with it a set of iconic images. If as Sontag suggests, "the photograph provides a quick way of apprehending something and a compact form for memorizing it," our responsibility to

provide a more complete visual representation of the Holocaust felt amplified (Sontag, 2003, p. 22). Our struggle, particularly with new members of our team, centered around the predominance of images from what we affectionately termed "the dark place."

We struggled with an overuse of dark images of death and destruction. In early drafts of the *Footnotes* learning guide (See Illustration 43) and in drafts of the website, powerful images that communicated the violence and destruction perpetrated during the Holocaust dominated the storyboards. The frequent use of these images might result from the speed with which they can be recognized and the ready availability of dramatic images like these. These images represent our socially constructed understanding of the period.

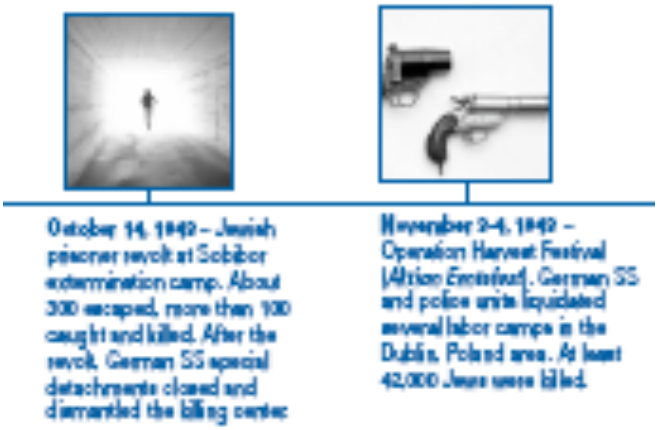

Illustration 41: Two images used for the timeline in the *Footnotes* learning guide, created by Lori Braun.

Mary Lee advocated strongly and effectively for a balance of images. We wondered how the impulse to frame the subject exclusively in images of destruction impacted the understanding of the images. Were we doing a dishonor to the victims by

only showing violence? Or worse, were we inflecting a second violence? Susan Sontag helped us think about this issue more fully:

> Photographs of the suffering and martyrdom of a people are more than reminders of death, of failure, of victimization. They invoke the miracle of survival. To aim at the perpetuation of memories means, inevitably, that one has undertaken the task of continually renewing, of creating memories – aided, above all, by the impress of iconic photographs (Sontag, 2003, p. 87).

While I agree with Sontag the possibility for this transference of hope, I do not agree that the transference occurs without assistance. Certainly the trope of destruction carries with it the binary of survival, but the association is not articulated and requires a certain stance on the part of the viewer. Yehuda Baeur suggests transformations are required in order to turn tragedy into meaning:

> Study of the Holocaust, the ultimate realm of death, is in a profound way also the study of life, for it exhibits the extremes of human nature...By itself, the Holocaust is an unmitigated disaster; it is only the application to it of the intelligence and the imagination that can transform it into tragedy, that is, an event upon which some pattern of meaning, however grim, can be imposed (Bauer, 2001)

As the project ensued and the ballet was crafted, we continued to test our use and form of images against this ethical frame.

THE COEXISTENCE EXHIBITION

Illustration 42: Coexistence exhibit on Austin's Town Lake Auditorium Shore. Photograph by author.

After the meeting of the Warren family, the Holocaust Museum Houston, UT and Ballet Austin on April 7th, 2004, the Warren family hosted a dinner for the Warren Fellows. Sitting together, Susan Llanes-Myers showed Cookie Ruiz a book about the Coexistence exhibit Holocaust Museum Houston intended to bring to Houston in April 2005. Llanes-Myers described the public art exhibit designed for installation in public areas like town squares in which people can walk through the billboards, viewing the images and reading the accompanying texts. Cookie asked to borrow the book… and carried it with her seemingly never to put it down. She immediately saw the impact the Coexistence exhibition could have on the *Light Project*:

> I had to have it. As Susan talked about how they situate the exhibit in high traffic areas, it became clear to me the exhibition was going to be "always on.[4]" It was 100% accessible in its placement in a natural gathering place. And the images powerfully communicated the issues of Coexistence. It was also tangible, when people saw the images they responded right away to the themes. The problem of creating new works, like the ballet, is that you can't show them what it is going to look like. Having this book allowed me to show people how the theme could be expressed through art (Ruiz, Interview 2007).

For Ruiz, the Coexistence exhibit provided three elements early in the project development. First it provided another aesthetic entry point through the visual arts, secondly it provided an opportunity to have spontaneous public conversations, and it concretized the abstract notion of the project's theme. She could point to pictures of people looking at artwork and describe how the ballet might function.

On November 10, 2004, Ruiz reported to the committee the exhibit would cost $75,000 to install outdoors or we could obtain a smaller indoor version for $25,000. We brainstormed possible locations including: Auditorium Shores, City Hall, Palmer Events Center, the Story of Texas Museum and The University of Texas Alumni Association Center.

On Nov 14, 2004, Tom Meredith recommended we secure the Coexistence exhibit for the March date: "I say we commit now. We can figure out the money later – I am certain we can raise it. Thoughts?" (Personal communication, November 2004). The next day, Rudy reported Bobby Epstein committed $25,000 to bring the Coexistence exhibit to Austin on the condition the billboards were installed on Auditorium Shores. Amy encouraged the gift while she and Bobby were running on the lake. On Nov. 16th, Kirk set up a meeting with the mayor. Cookie, Kirk and Bobby would meet with the mayor and the city manager to invite them to join the partnership, hosting the exhibit

[4] "Always on" is a phrase used in the Ballet Austin capital campaign.

including supervising the installation and assuring its protection. The city could not commit cash but could offer the in-kind contribution pending board approval. The committee made certain the board understood the positive benefits of the project. By January we had secured the commitment from the city. Raphie Etgar and his assistant came to Austin on January 28th, 2004 to meet with our team, including city officials.

Illustration 43: Raphie Etgar at meeting with officials from city hall. Photograph by Amy Rudy.

In the rain, we convinced a reluctant Etgar that Auditorium Shores provided the perfect site for the exhibit. He preferred "our town square" to which I replied, "Town Lake is our town square." The city reports 10,000 people use the trail at Town Lake each day. That number would be multiplied as many as 10 times during the South by Southwest music festival, scheduled during the exhibition. We convinced Etgar that this site would serve our purposes more than Republic Park or a site at The University of Texas at Austin also under consideration.

We attempted to partner with a visual arts organization. I called the Education Directors at two organizations, Arthouse and the Austin Museum of Art. I suggested the project would assume costs for the exhibit, we would ask them to manage the opening

event conceived as a community celebration. Both organizations had openings scheduled for the weekend of the opening and declined. In retrospect, I recognize that I should have scheduled formal meetings with the Directors of the organizations and included influential board members in the conversation. I resisted this tactic, uncomfortable with exerting external pressure on the programmatic staff. As a former programmer, I had sensitivities to this phenomenon. Despite the unavailability of partnering arts organizations, we proceeded to plan for the Coexistence exhibit and a celebratory opening.

The exhibit arrived on the morning of March 3rd, 2005. Cookie and I met leaders of the City of Austin's Parks and Recreation department for coffee to debrief the installation. We then spent the day onsite, trading off on-camera segments with the press. Thirty-six billboard sized images installed on Town Lake proved to be good TV on a slow news day.

Illustration 44: Crew shot after the installation of Coexistence in Austin

Cookie often told the story of Raphie giving an impromptu gallery talk on the exhibition to the city parks and recreation staff installing the exhibit as they sat eating their lunches (See Illustration 46). Cookie recognized the significance of "That moment when all those workmen were sitting and Raphie saw them as 30 people who could become ambassadors for the exhibit" (Interview 2006). At the end of the installation day, we took a group picture (See Illustration 47). A young boy, who happened to be at the lake with his Father, chose the image that served as our backdrop. This image currently represents the Austin installation of Coexistence in a recently published book written by Etgar (2007) called, Coexistence.

Illustration 45: Group shot of the Coexistence installation. Photographer John Daniels.

The city, excited by the quality and the possibilities of the exhibit, found internal funding to erect lighting so that the exhibition could be seen day and night. Toby Futrell, Austin's City Manager wrote: "It's been fun and well worth it. Nice job, all" (Email, March 24, 2005). The Parks Department requested a copy of the photograph of the installation crew in front of the exhibit. The city had the image copied and framed for

each member of the crew. The Mayor included references to the Coexistence exhibit in his State of the City address.

Art Amplifies the Civic Nature of the Partnership

Our original program design did not include the Coexistence Exhibition. We did not conceptualize either a visual art component or a public event of this magnitude. It proved to be a critical component from both a representational perspective and from a civic perspective. I confess to not seeing the ramifications at first. Frankly I feared the addition of such an expensive element would force us to make other programmatic cuts. Seeing the enthusiasm it created in Cookie helped convince me of the potential impact.

Initially my conception of the impact was limited to promotional qualities. As Amy said, "This installation will be a tremendous billboard for the project – I can't wait to see it" (Personal communication, January 24, 2005). I recognized the value of this grand gesture to create greater visibility; I did not fully appreciate the ways in which it would make the project more accessible by reducing the barriers of place, cost, and content.

I hadn't fully realized the impact of role of place in the power of delivering our goals. In this case, conversations around the Coexistences images began in this anomalous site. The images interrupted the expected practice at the location. The shear intrusion of their size forced people to engage with the images, and subsequently with the themes of the images. Placing the works in a site conceived as public reinforced the notion that the engagement with the work was intended for all.

The public nature created a no cost entry point for the public. This no-cost feature was not only financial. The project included many other free events. There is an associative cost associated with patronizing an organizational space. Walking into the

halls of a building forms at least a temporary identification of affiliation. Such reactions are behind the comment expressed so often, "I just don't feel comfortable there…" The feelings that come with alienation and disenfranchisement exact a cost.

Visual forms of representation strengthened our project's message. A colleague from a local museum wrote about the impact this way:

> Dear Brent -- I just had to stop and tell you - I walk/jiggle the hike and bike 4 mornings a week - always the same route - to Stevie Ray and back - and have been so energized, swept away, pulled apart, spilled on the floor - every time I come upon the Co-existence installation. It is grand, it is impactful, it is Austin, it is human - I'm sure many have told you how wonderful it could be if it was a permanent installation - I would love to see that too!
>
> This morning - this beautiful Austin morning - at around 9am - there were hundreds of people around Auditorium Shores, Tai Chi and Judo guys, kayakers, people playing with their dogs, people gathered around the Run -Tex water station - it was just buzzing - young and old - many ethnicities, many backgrounds - and everyone around became part of the piece for me - it just about moved me to tears it was so beautiful.
>
> I am looking forward to the rest of the events associated with the project - please tell Steven as well - you two and your whole team - your voices are being heard (Personal communication, March 12, 2005).

As she described the ways in which the people around the exhibit become part of the art, we come to realize something about the nature of transdisciplinary work. Given space, the arts and civic aspects interact in such a way that each element informs the other in epistemological terms. We come to know more about the art through the practices of civic engagement and more about civic engagement through the practices of art.

ONGOING SCHOLARLY RESEARCH

Ellsworth writes, "We come to know the world by acting in it, making something of it, and doing the never-ending work and play of responding to what our actions make occur – both inside and out" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 56). During this project, I came to know

the world differently by "acting in it" and in this way, my research efforts stemmed from my responses to what my actions made occur. In February and March of 2005, I created two pieces of scholarship, both incorporating performance techniques, both involving the ethics of Holocaust and research. Although Mary Lee and I (often with other colleagues including Dr.'s Field and French) collaborated on several related research pieces during the two-year development and implementation period, I will focus here on works I made individually.

Not surprisingly, I became acutely aware of the ethical treatment of others during my investigation of the Holocaust. If lessons can be learned from the Holocaust, the ethical treatment of others might be paramount among them. Many teachers and speakers interviewed during the Professional Development Institute echoed this sentiment using a variety of frames. Laura Luker, an English teacher at Del Valle High School framed the issue in terms of global citizenship:

> As teachers we reach so many students who soon be going out in the world making their own decisions. Becoming full citizens of the world. That's what we need to try make of them 'citizens of the world." People who have a social responsibility who don't only think of themselves, but see the bigger picture (Luker, Interview, February 2005).

Will Meinecke, a historian at the US Holocaust Memorial Museum, framed the issue in terms of democratic participation:

> Germany before the Nazis was very much a functioning democracy. It underscores the fact that it could happen any where any time any place. It underscores the role individuals' play in a democracy. Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project plays an important role in that it tries to mobilize the public consciousness about what they can do in our society to effect change. Every individual has power (Meinecke, Interview February 2005).

While Sara Brennon, English teacher at Murchison Middle School, framed the issue from a personal local perspective: "These are lessons we take into our own life. How do we

resist peer pressure? How do we stand up for what's right? How do we treat others so that we get fair treatment?" (Brennon, Interview, February 2005). From different perspectives, each offers an opportunity to consider how a study of the Holocaust informs the social construction of ethical behavior in contemporary life.

The implications of their statements suggest that we might learn from the Holocaust through negative example in order to stop/prevent contemporary misdeeds. We must act and live in the world, however cruel or irrational. As Bauer implores, "too many humans have been murdered and the time has come to try and stop these waves that threaten to engulf us" (Bauer, 2001, p. xiv). Individual and institutional practices of threatening behaviors, large and small, seemed pervasive in the world during the *Light Project*. My outrage at our lack of response in the Sudan, my outrage at the demonization of gays in the election cycle, my outrage at the apparent racist behaviors of some police officers in our community fanned my desire to study the historical complexities of ethics in this period. These responses seem fairly predictable to me. The ethical lapse for me existed in how easily we accepted outraged inaction. Everyone I knew expressed disgust, horror and shame over Darfur, some even participated in a rally at the Capitol building. None of us, including myself, did much more. The social construction of ethical behavior seemed less rigorous than we hoped.

These ethical gaps intrigued me. I predicted an awareness of unrealized ethical actions. Less predictable to me was my questioning the ethical gaps involved in studying the Holocaust and asking others to engage with the topic.

Ironically, I used an ethical argument to justify the systemic qualities of the project. I often said:

> We talked a lot about the ethics involved with preparing these young teachers [the Warren Fellows] to teach such a difficult subject. And we talked a lot about how the community was supporting their 'risky teaching' of this emotionally dense subject. We also talked a lot about the conversations that were started in those classrooms. Any study of the Holocaust brings up more questions than it does answers. How were students being supported outside the classroom away from that teacher? (Interview, April 2005).

I framed the need for community events of the Holocaust as an ethical response that supported teachers and students engaged in Holocaust education. Implicitly I argued that we needed to provide a rich context of Holocaust related activities throughout the community that might provide a space, literally and figuratively, for students to raise and explore the fundamental questions of humanity that arise in a study of the Holocaust. To not provide Holocaust related activities as a community, abandoned students during a vulnerable inquiry. While I believed this exaggerated argument, I also feared the ethical ramifications of promoting a study of the Holocaust and the ethical ramifications of promoting representations of the Holocaust. I doubted myself as an ethical researcher engaged in this work and I doubted myself as an ethical instigator of promoting this discussion in our community. I wrote a performance paper that explored this issue, called *Decency and data: Between sensationalism and self-regulation* (See Appendix A). Some of the foundational ideas in that paper have been incorporated into this work.

In that paper, I explore the tensions between decency and self-regulation when researchers deal with both sensational images and emotionally sensitive data. I ask the question, is it ethical to videotape research participants during emotional breakdowns as they come to understand the Holocaust? Is it more ethical to audiotape them during these moments than to videotape them because it is less sensational and more decent, or does it seem more decent because of our own social regulations? What are the implications of self-regulating trauma during the study of the traumas associated with Holocaust

education? While I don't find answers to these questions, I use performance techniques to explore the data.

The second work used a performance-based research technique to make sense of the journals of Warren Fellows. In this work titled, *Penumbral Moments and Liminal Spaces,* I reconstructed journal entries into a theatrical form. The emergent themes found throughout the journals became characters in the play. In this way, each character representing a unique theme expressed the words of several participants. Each line spoken comes directly from the participant's journals, but recrafted to create a new narrative. This new narrative represents my attempts to understand what these students might be going through. The work tells us more about how a teacher struggles to create understanding in Holocaust education than it tells about learners in this same context. In between dramatic scenes, I ask myself questions and identify personal insights.

These two works suggest the ways in which the *Light Project* permeated my thinking. The impact of transdisciplinary work for me included the infusion of performance techniques in my research and the exploration of ethics.

COMMUNITY DIALOGUE

Illustration 46: Participants at a community dialogue event. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Community dialogue was a central goal of the project. Our plan to foster that dialogue was simple. We would provide a rich experience about the subject of tolerance and respect, an exhibit, a panel discussion, or a ballet, then we would build a discussion around a series of framing questions.

We discussed the development of the questions at a leadership meeting. Cookie and the PR firm supplied this first draft on January 18th, 2004:

1. What can we learn about living ethically by studying the Holocaust?
2. How do we choose NOT to remain bystanders to acts of bigotry and hate?
3. What actions can we take to promote tolerance in our community?

The next day, Mary Lee and I attempted to give the second question a more active stance:

1. What can we learn about living ethically by studying the Holocaust?
2. How ~~do we choose NOT to remain~~ can we avoid being bystanders to acts of bigotry and hate?
3. What actions can we take to promote tolerance in our community?

On January 20, 2004, Tommie made the second question even stronger by making it personal:

1. What can we learn about living ethically by studying the Holocaust?
2. ~~How can we avoid being bystanders~~ What is our responsibility when confronted by acts of bigotry and hate?
3. What actions can we take to promote tolerance in our community?

Satisfied with the questions, we sent them out to our steering committee asking them to be the first to sign a banner pledging to consider these questions. Ann Richards said she was happy to sign the banner in spirit, but that our first question was impossible to answer. With our press conference, four days away we rewrote quickly:

1. ~~What can we learn about living ethically by studying the Holocaust?~~ How are the issues of the Holocaust relevant in our community today?
2. What is our responsibility when confronted by acts of bigotry and hate?
3. What actions can we take to promote tolerance in our community?

During the framing of the questions, we continued our ongoing discussion about the use of the word tolerance, discussed at length earlier in this paper. Although it remained an ongoing conversation to which we never fully reached consensus, our partners at Holocaust Museum Houston responded adamantly that we not use the word tolerance. They felt tolerance, as "the lowest acceptable threshold becomes too close for comfort to the behaviors of apathy or looking the other way" (Personal communication, January 24, 2004). To which Cookie responded that we intended to use the word thoughtfully as a trigger for these kinds of conversations. Rather than eliminate the word from our vocabulary, we would engage our community in a discussion of the term and explore the limits and possibilities the word suggests. She stated, "Our hope is the community will come to a fuller appreciation of the limits of "tolerance" as the lowest acceptable threshold" (Personal communication, January 24, 2004). Mary Lee suggested we create an op-ed series on the implications of tolerance. Although it never materialized, I still think it would make a great series.

Throughout the course of the project our language usage shifted. Instead of promoting tolerance we often "worked against intolerance." In some documents, we opted for softer language altogether, promoting "understanding":

1. How are the issues of the Holocaust relevant in our community today?
2. What is our responsibility when confronted with acts of bigotry and hate?
3. What actions can we take to promote ~~tolerance~~ understanding in our community?

These questions served to frame discussions at our public events. We encouraged dialogue by asking these questions after events like the ballet or during fund raising dinners. We also held events such as the town hall meeting and the Panel Discussion on Coexistence dedicated exclusively to generating dialogue.

Community Dialogue at the Performance

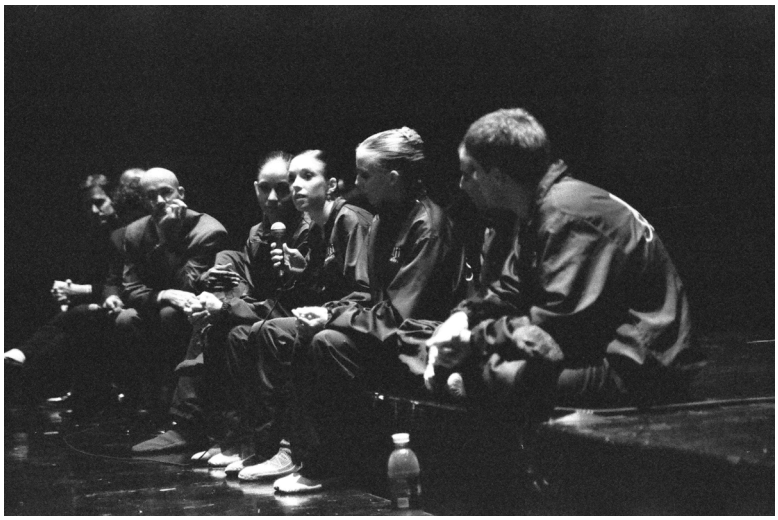

Illustration 47: Community dialogue after the performance. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

At the end of the work, typically 400 people would come to the front of the stage house to engage in a conversation with Stephen Mills, the dancers and project leadership, usually Mary Lee and I (See Illustration 49). Tom Meredith moderated the first two

discussions. Alan Potash, of the Anti-Defamation League, moderated the last two performances. Moderating the conversation proved challenging. While the audience was eager to talk, they were more eager to talk about the ballet than the questions. Many asked questions to help process the complexities within the ballet, many wanted to relay personal stories.

While Ballet Austin engaged in this type of audience interactions during most of their productions, these discussions were different. Mills remarked on the size of the events. He said, "usually 50 people stay after the production to talk, for these events we had hundreds" (Mills, Interview 2007). He suggested the dancers take the opportunity to amplify their roles as dancers by discussing their new understandings of the Holocaust and its implications as discovered in researching and dancing this production.

The dialogue never veered far enough from the specifics of the production to engage the audience in a robust conversation about our personal responsibilities of when confronting bigotry and hate. In this case, the arts inhibited community dialogue on the prearranged topic. I left wondering if more time would allow the audience to finish their inquiry about the rich dramatic work and begin using that understanding to approach the questions of future responsibilities. Did people in the audience need to make sense of the dance before they could begin applying its meanings to their lives or the world around them?

Community Dialogue at Coexistence

Illustration 48: Coexistence panel discussion with Mayor Will Wynn, Rep. Dawnna Dukes, Dr. Angela Valenzuela, Alan Potash, moderated by Rich Oppel. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

During the planning of the opening ceremonies of the Coexistence Exhibition, we realized we had an opportunity to convene a formal community dialogue. Alan Potash, head of the Austin Anti-Defamation League (ADL) agreed to lead the efforts. Lily Saad encouraged Abe Foxman to speak at our event, but his travel schedule would not permit it. Instead, the national ADL office sent Carol Stern. To compliment her talk, we assembled a panel that represented the racial diversity of Austin. We invited Mayor Will Wynn, State Representative Dawnna Dukes and Dr. Angela Valenzuela. Rich Oppel the editor of the *Austin American Statesman* moderated the program. Each spoke about the possibility of Coexistence from their perspective.

Stern positioned coexistence using the image of her son and a neighborhood boy playing while their Jewish and Muslim parents looked on in the shadow of World Trade Center Towers. Dawnna Dukes told the story of growing up on the East Side of Austin accounting the inequities of that experience. Dukes suggested her work as a legislator aimed to give voice to the disenfranchised and encouraged us to find our political voice. Angela Valenzuela outlined the insidiousness of white privilege and encouraged us to examine the ways white privilege might be operating in our worlds. Mayor Wynn encouraged dialogue and took responsibility for the actions of some city staff that did not live up to the promise of coexistence.

Rich Oppel encouraged the audience to engage in dialogue. The conversation quickly turned to issues of race. The room seemed to agree that problems existed in Austin. The room also seemed to agree the problem included long traditions of institutional racism. Those traditions manifested themselves in obvious acts of bigotry and more subtle conditions of white privilege and exclusionary practices. It was noted that the audience did not fully represent traditionally excluded racial groups. No practical suggestions emerged for how to fully engage the community. The audience committed to seeking opportunities for dialogue and reducing barriers to inclusion.

Community Dialogue at the Town Hall Meeting

Illustration 49: Bill Stotesbery with Linda Ellerbee during town hall meeting. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

While we looked for opportunities throughout the *Light Project* to engage in dialogue, the televised Town Hall meeting constituted our only formal event designed exclusively for community dialogue in our original proposal. Evan Smith agreed to help secure a moderator with a national reputation. Linda Ellerbee was not our first choice. Initially, we hoped Bill Moyers would moderate our discussion. He declined due to family health issues. On October 28, 2004, Smith recommended Bob Schieffer. By January 5th, Smith reported that Schieffer declined, as did Sam Donaldson. He happily reported that Linda Ellerbee accepted his invitation. We felt Ellerbee matched our needs perfectly.

The town hall meeting took place in the KLRU-TV studios. Dutch Rall, who previously created a short feature of the *Light Project*, produced the show. I arranged for

him to film the testimonies of three survivors to serve as the anchors of the episode. In between these testimonies, the invited guests would engage in a community dialogue organized around the three framing questions of the project. Ms. Ellerbee's assistant requested a script to guide the conversation. Mary Lee and I wrote the first draft that was adjusted for television by Bill Stotesbery of KLRU.

We invited 150 people who had previously attended several *Light Project* events. Our audience participants represented a diversity of race, gender, age and religion including public officials Mayor Will Wynn and Superintendent Pat Forgione. Again the dialogue focused on a shared sense of the problem, expressed with an optimistic hope for a solution. Ellerbee described the conversation as a "love fest" (Ellerbee, 2005). Possibilities were expressed in tropes of dialogue, education and values. Reginald Harris expressed the "need to call it out when we see prejudice" (Harris, 2005). The performative environment of the Austin City Limits set at the KLRU-TV studio heightened the performative nature of the dialogue.

DOCUMENTATION PHASE: AN EMMY, TWO TELLY'S AND A DISSERTATION

The documentation of the project took three forms: photographic documentation, a video documentary, and this case study. As we were constructing the budget, we discussed the importance of spending money on documentation. We determined the photographic and video documentation efforts would become important elements in the constructing of a model.

Hannah Neal became an obvious choice to produce the photographic work. She recently presented an exhibition of her work titled *Behind the Curtain* featuring backstage shots of Ballet Austin dancers. Stephen and Cookie agreed she would make an excellent choice. I invited Hannah to join Mary Lee and I for lunch to discuss the possibilities.

Within a few weeks we negotiated a contract. I supplied Hannah with a list of events we needed documented.

The selection of a videographer proved more challenging. Webeck introduced the idea to Andy Garrison, a UT professor whose work on the Eastside Stories filmmaking project garnered much attention. His schedule did not permit him to take on the project. Meredith introduced us to a filmmaker he had funded in another project, Karen Kocher. She in turn, introduced us to Robert Foshko, UT professor with significant experience doing live production television production. I worked for weeks negotiating a contract. Our negotiations never reached a satisfactory conclusion.

As those negotiations continued, we approached Dutch Rall, who recently produced an eight-minute magazine format television segment on the *Light Project* for a new KLRU production called *In Context*. Rall could not commit to the project citing his recent promotion as the Producer of *Texas Monthly Talks*. Rall later received a Lone Star Emmy for the piece he created on the *Light Project*.

Finally, we agreed to hire Herbert Bennet, a videographer who created a short piece for Ballet Austin a few years earlier. Cookie Ruiz and I negotiated the contract. He created a thirty-minute documentary we titled *The Making of Light: The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. While the piece never aired, it won two National Telly Awards. The work was awarded first place in the Cultural Division and second place in the Non-Profit Division.

This dissertation marks another attempt at documenting the event.

Chapter Seven: The Dance *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*

The ballet served as the centerpiece of the project. It certainly gathered the most attention, public and private, and created the most buzz. James Young chose our speaking engagement because of his curiosity surrounding the dance component. (Personal Communication, February 19, 2005). It arguably carried the most risk. Certainly Stephen, as choreographer, took the greatest risk in its creation. Using an example of poetry, Langer cautions one danger of artistic representation of the Holocaust:

> Holocaust poetry should not be mistaken for a renewal of the spirit or used as a reason for redressing the cruelty of the doom it reflects (Langer, 1995, p. 559).

Scholars argue the attempt to use the suffering of the Holocaust as a renewal of the spirit suggests that something positive, a silver lining, occurs as a result of the suffering (Mintz, 2001, 2004). Langer does however suggest a possible role:

> Its true legacy is a tribute to the resilience of language and the ability of the artistic imagination to meet a chaotic challenge and with sheer inventive skill change it into durable, if often difficult and unfamiliar, poetic forms (Langer, 1995, p. 559).

The capacity of the artistic imagination lies, he suggests, in the capacity for articulation of chaotic incidents into a durable form. While he excuses the artistic forms as "often difficult and unfamiliar," perhaps this quality contains their pedagogical promise.

The following section attempts to mine the movements and images of the dance, *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* for their pedagogical promise. Each section will describe the work under examination, and provide analysis connecting the work with issues important to Holocaust education.

ENTERING THE AUDITORIUM

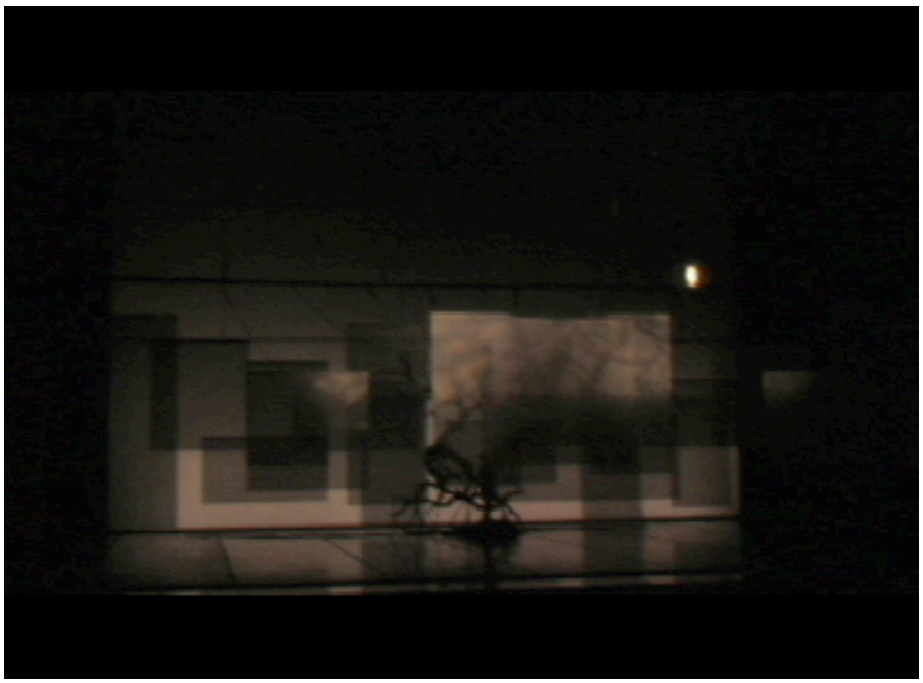

Illustration 50: Video still from *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.

When the audience enters the auditorium for the dance production of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*, the scene is pointedly theatrical. The traditional grand drape is drawn out of sight. The central set piece, a rope construction that resembles a tree, suspends obviously from a baton pipe, lowered to be visible to the audience. Three more baton pipes cut across the stage, further obstructing the rope tree. Batons holding the lighting instruments hang within view with the typical masking removed. A series of white swaths fill the stage floor. They look like some kind of cloth. They left me thinking less about what they were, and more about what they might become. Downstage left, an 18" wire globe sits on the floor. The opening image the audience confronts, by exposing the mechanics of the stagecraft at play, clearly positions this work as theatrical.

The theatricality sets up several important interpretive frames. By highlighting the overt theatricality of the event, Mills and the designers construct a relationship among the audience members and the theatrical event that promotes and limits certain responses. The theatricality establishes a relationship of physical and emotional distance. Similarly, the overt theatricality implies a presentational style rather than a representational style that resists the anticipation of simulation experiences. Mills and the design team also create expectations. The laying bare of the theatrical elements also calls attention to the authorial hands of the artists at work, making it clear that both the artist and the audience share in the construction of meaning making during this event.

Theatrical Elements Control Distances

Distance between the audience members and the theatrical experience is mediated/constructed through the theatrical elements of this production in several ways. The orientation of the audience in a proscenium hall creates a physical distance that is supported by the psychological distances created by the visible theatrical elements.

A formal proscenium arch separates the audience and the dancers. The audience literally watches the performance through a framing window. Other conventions, like using a thrust stage in which the audience surrounds the players, or even placing the audience among the action are examples of theatrical conventions that set the audience in a different relationship, one that attempts to reduce physical and psychological distance between the audience member and the experience. By reducing the distance, theater makers attempt to suggest the audience and the players are not markedly different. Jerzy Grotowski famously inserted audiences within the performance space but suggested, "the elimination of the stage-auditorium dichotomy is not the important thing… The essential concern is finding the right audience-actor relationship for each type of performance and

embodying the decision in physical arrangements" (Grotowski, 1968, p. 20). The choice of the formal audience-performer dichotomy established by the proscenium, constructs a physical break between the two groups. Implying what performers act on stage will not be acted out in the auditorium house. The experience is an artificial event,

The exposure of the theatrical devices, like lights and stage pipes creates a psychological distance. By emphasizing the constructions of the performance, the audience is reminded that they are not voyeurs of events but rather voyeurs of performers presenting a performance about events. This creates an important distance with ramifications for art and education, particularly when the subject matter involves powerful emotions like those evoked by the Holocaust.

Theatrical Elements That Resist Reenactment Impulses

Seeing the lights, usually masked, and seeing the ways in which the set pieces are suspended, reinforces the notion that this production will not attempt to create scenes representing frames of realism that attempt to reconstruct scenes from life in which the audience is viewing through "the fourth wall." Just as the convention of forwarding the theatricality of the event creates a distanced physical relationship with the audience, the audience is asked in this relationship to view and experience the scenes on stage, not step into the world of the action. Surely empathy is engaged, but not a kind of physical and emotional reenactment.

Of course we have no assurance as we enter the theater that this convention will maintain. The museum exhibition at the Museum of Tolerance at the Simon Wiesenthal Center in Los Angeles constructs a similar distancing effect with the use of white plaster figures that represent characters from the museum staff. These characters, representing contemporaries, comment on the scenes of the Holocaust displayed in the dioramas. Their

theatricality, as featureless, plaster figures, reminds us this is a theatrical construction. As the exhibition continues however, the characters' place in time shifts, changing our relationship with the exhibit. As the exhibit describes the deportations and increased devastations, we realize two of our "guides" are missing, as the third is sitting on top of a pile of rubble, presumably in a ghetto. The convention that once highlighted the distance between the events and our own lives are confounded now, as our mediating guide suffers from the events of the story. While his mediation was once through expert knowledge as a museum historian or curator, the character now serves as a personal witness. The museum exhibit asks us to accept that the characters live in our times, then asks us to accept them living in the war setting. Are they in our times or are we in time of the Holocaust? This question is soon answered by the exhibition space as you learn about the camps. The floor changes to cobblestones, a large image of the Birkenau death camp covers a focal wall. The visitor of the exhibit is required to move to the next gallery by choosing to walk through one of two tunnels: one marked "old and sick," the other marked "young and healthy." The mediation no longer exists. The exhibit asks you to enter into the simulation, to make a choice, attempting to eliminate distances. The exhibition subverts the theatrical contrivance and reverts to a simulation effect.

The stage elements of the ballet create a distance that is harder to subvert than this museum exhibition.

Theatrical Elements Reinforces Responsibilities of Authoring and Interpreting

The use of exposed theatrical effects reinforces the notions of authoring and interpreting involved in this production. Seeing the hand of the artist, manifested in the stage equipment, we are reminded that this experience is devised. An expectation is established that there will not be imitation of historical events only artistic constructions.

The ontological arguments against the possibility of mimesis, in favor of poesis, are rendered mute. The exposed lighting and backstage walls clearly position this work as a construction. In so doing, the audience is asked to acknowledge the authorial position of its creator, and similarly their interpretive position as an audience. If as Ellsworth (2005) suggests, "the learning self that these anomalous places of learning invite to participate in attempts to invent new ways to see and new things to say does not preexist its involvement," then the meanings constructed through this dialogic experience have a shared author in the creator and the interpreter (p. 7). The blatant reminders of theatricality reinforce the responsibilities of the audience as interpreter.

Attending to physical and psychological distances, resisting reenactment impulses and reinforcing responsibilities of authorship and interpretive practices represent fundamental concerns in both artistic representation of the Holocaust and in Holocaust education. Providing students a performance-based opportunity to explore the ramifications of these issues provides an important theoretical framework to begin a classroom investigation of the Holocaust.

Pedagogical Opportunities: Engaging Voids

The lights dim and the batons rise in the dark, clearing the stage of all but the tree in the background and the wire ball in the foreground. On a scrim curtain at the back of the stage, a projection appears of the text of Dan Pagis's poem "Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway-Car" (Langer, 1995, p. 588):

here in this carload

i am eve

with abel my son

if you see my other son

cain son of man

tell him that i

This poem appears often in the study of the Holocaust. During the course of the *Light Project*, it figured prominently in my experience. I first encountered it in Langer's Art from the Ashes anthology. Will Meinecke, historian from the US Holocaust Memorial Museum used the poem in his presentation during the 2004 Warren Fellowship, as did Dr. David Lindquist of Indiana University. At Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, the Pagis poem plays an important part in the memorial that incorporates a boxcar installed on tracks that extend over the valley. Sam Totten used the poem during the professional development institute for teachers. And it was included in an early draft of the Footnotes educational guide that accompanied the ballet but then replaced with another Pagis poem.

Illustration 51: Boxcar memorial at Yad Vashem features the Pagis poem “Written in Pencil in the Sealed Railway-Car.” Photograph by author.

The poem provides a context rich with interpretive possibilities. The work’s title immediately conjures iconic Holocaust imagery of the boxcar, a potent symbol of the transport of millions of victims to death camps. The pencil reference suggests a kind of temporariness, when contrasted with the permanence of an ink pen that cannot be erased. These Holocaust images, which set the work in a specific historical period, contrast the references to Eve, Cain and Abel that interrupt the unity of time. The possibilities in this poem are many, but the specifics are few. Langer suggests: “Pagis’s poems leave his readers the challenges of filling in the Holocaust referents” (Langer, 1995, p. 584). Pagis provides sufficient imagery to scaffold the reader through a cognitive and emotional

experience requiring the reader to apply their prior knowledge and experience. This exclusion of details beyond the contextual images demands a cognitive responsibility of the reader. The reader of this poem, much like the viewer of this dance, is "left to our own ingenuity…to imagine, with the artist's help, a mental landscape displaying the skewed remains" (Langer, 1995, p. 585). The audience maintains a responsibility to engage the voids surrounding the referential landscape.

By inserting this poem at the beginning of the work, Mills establishes a pattern of cognitive responsibility for the interpretation of this dance. In this way, he challenges the perceived limitation in dance to provide historical specificity, by providing a rich interpretive landscape and an example of how to engage in an interpretive practice. The audience is more prepared to engage with this minimal dance form, just as they engage with the more familiar minimal poetic form of Dan Pagis.

THE ADAM AND EVE SECTION

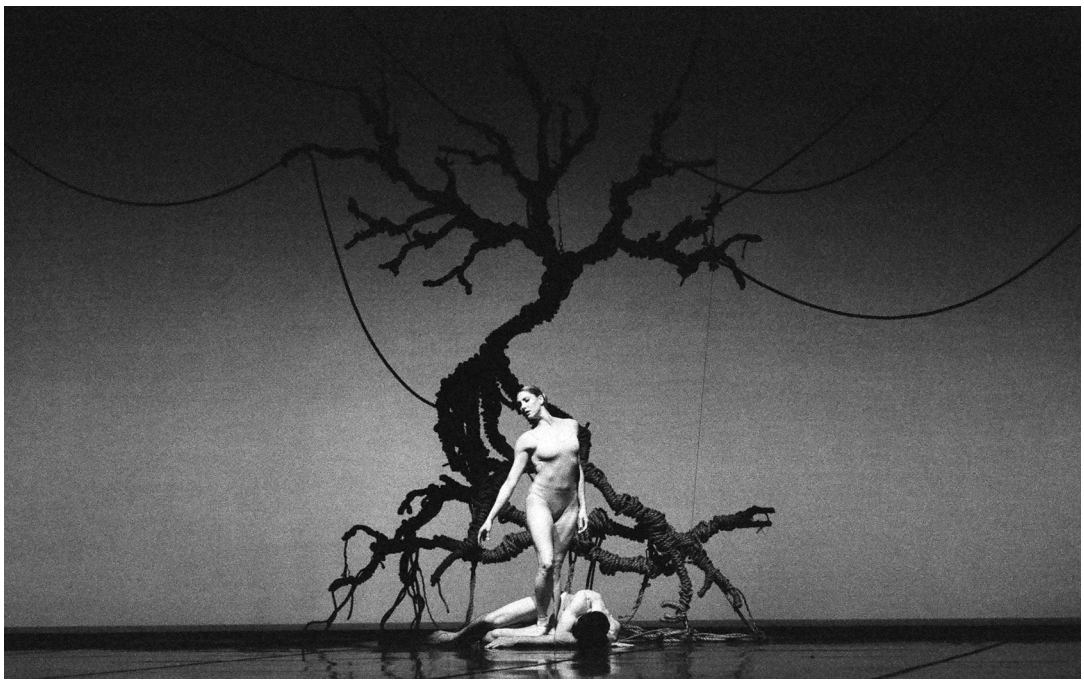

Illustration 52: The Adam and Eve section from *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Two performers appear in silhouette center stage, one man and one woman. She, standing with her right hip extended in opposition to her left shoulder, while his body lies on the stage floor curled around her creating a mass in contact with the floor. Her right arm is slightly extended from her body. Together they echo the line of the tree limbs and exposed root system of the set piece directly behind them. The female dancer wears only a flesh colored trunks and short cropped tank top and the man wears only flesh colored tights. Skin shows.

The opening image blends three inspirational sources: the Adam and Eve story, seeing the Pagis poem inscribed at the railcar memorial at Yad Vashem in Jerusalem, and a clipping of a print ad image (See Illustration 53). As a part of his creative process,

Stephen collects appealing and evocative images. He often uses them to communicate ideas to designers or dancers. Sometimes the references inspire his dance making conceptually, other times, as in this case, the images are incorporated directly into the work.

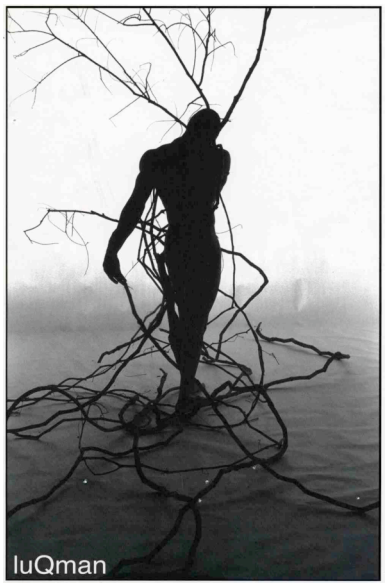

Illustration 53: Source material for the opening image. Artist unknown.

As the man and the woman begin to move, their arms trace jagged lines, echoing the lines of the tree behind them. The man rolls to the floor and holds the woman horizontally above his outstretched body. After suspending that position, she flips over his head, finishing on her feet with her body arched in opposition to the curve of the tree (See Illustration 54).

Illustration 54: Production still from Adam and Eve section of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Like most of the movement in this first section, their feet remain rooted with any locomotive movements employing low and grounded slides. Weight suspensions motivate lifts throughout the opening pas de deux. Mills describes it this way: "The movement was playing with the idea of people coming from the earth. I was trying to use movements that developed from the roots of the tree and grew upward in a hopeful way, always reflecting the organic elements of tree" (Interview, 2006).

Seeing the images of two people, a man and a woman in front of a tree, after reading the Pagis poem, situates the dancers as characters in the creation myth of Adam and Eve. Mills said: "I thought it was interesting seeing how the poem at Yad Vashem used the biblical metaphor of creation. If people believe the story, then Adam and Eve populated the world. So the ballet opens under a tree, which could be a metaphor for the evil that was to come or one of the other biblical references, the tree of life or family trees

and roots" (Interview, 2006). His movement style in this section visually resembles the shape of the tree, continuously reminding the viewer of these multiple metaphoric interpretations. In the opening movement, the female dancer suspends above the man in a horizontal position creating an abstracted coital position. This image reinforces the characters procreative role. Soon, more dancers join the couple, first 2, then 4, "until the first movement is populated with dancers" in silhouette, repeating movement phrases established in the opening section (Interview, 2006).

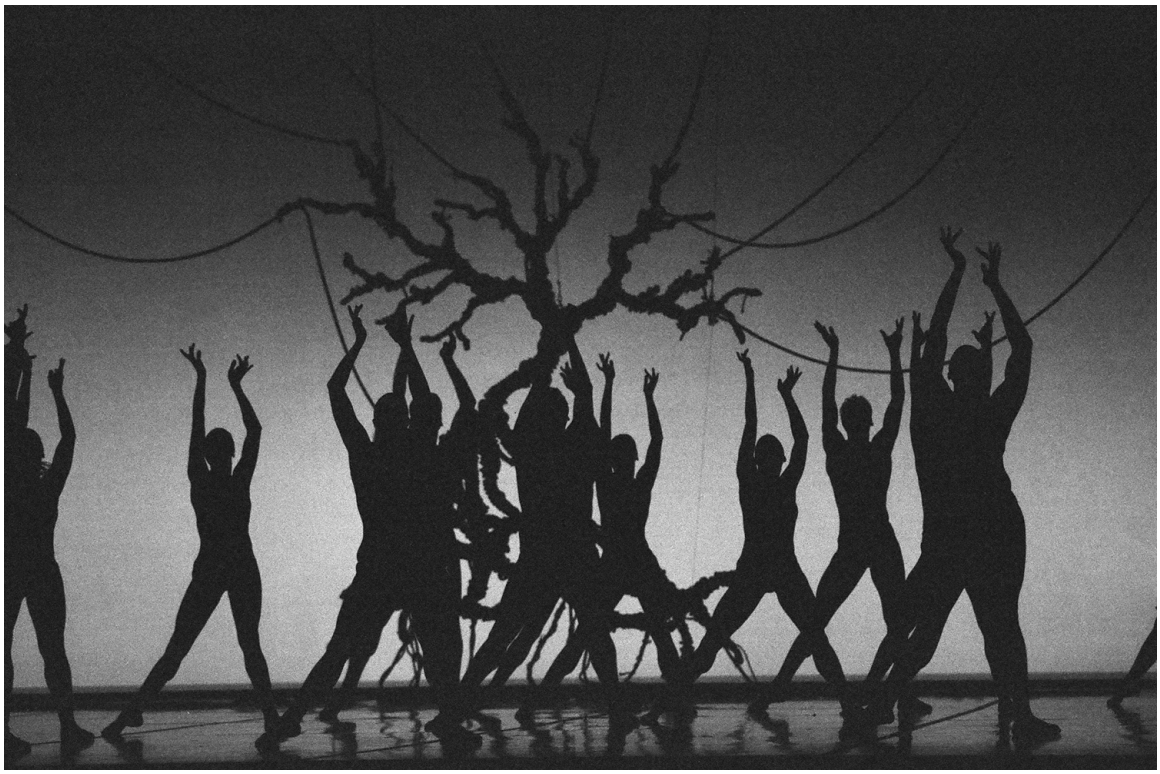

Illustration 55: Still from Adam and Eve section in which arms are raised to the sky like limbs of the tree. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Mills reveals images of time throughout the ballet in very interesting ways. In this early section, he primarily uses stillness, canon, repetition, and a pendulum movement to

refer to time and the passage of time. Mills uses two stillness techniques to reinforce the audiences' awareness of time, one within a movement phrase and one between movement phrases. In this opening section, Mills abruptly halts movement within the phrase, asking dancers to pause before the phrase is resolved. The resulting stillness creates a kind of rupture in the dance. The rupture creates a void in the movement in which our mind races to fill. As Young suggests, we ask ourselves what is missing (Young, 2000). My mind tries to resolve the movement phrase -- to finish the movement in time. By placing these pauses abruptly within a phrase, Mills reminds us that choreographed movement is organized in time and space. Mills also reinforces the notion of time in his dance by asking dancers to freeze positions while other dancers resolve a movement canon. The stillness of the dancer having resolved the phrase allows your eye to follow a wave of movement across the stage to each successive dancer. The canon creates a visual anticipation and expectation of what will occur next. It is in the expectation of what comes next, that Mills reinforces time passing. Similarly, his use of repetition of phrases and motifs emphasize the passage of time. In opening movement, the dancers in silhouette freeze on a tree like position (See Illustration 57). Mills repeats that image "again in the light, with clothes of this century, as though they are the same people with the same roots" (Interview, 2006). This act moves the story forward in time. Repetition in this case, serves as a chronological metaphor.

Pedagogical Problems: Theology

Situating this work within the shared Judeo-Christian creation myth of Adam and Eve and the birth of fratricide, creates a complicated pedagogical opportunity. The biblical references beg many students to ask a central theological question often inspired by the Holocaust: Where was God? A common question, that causes more dissonance

than consonance. Yehuda Bauer (2001) says, “the theology of the Holocaust is fascinating, but it is a dead end” (p. 212).

Bauer offers five lines of reasoning he ultimately doesn’t find useful in illuminating the Holocaust. First, he offers the argument that the will or plan of God is unfathomable to us. Reason will not help us answer the question and we must remain satisfied by faith. Secondly, he offers the argument that God allows humans to choose between good and evil. Bauer suggests this free will argument creates an irrelevancy to God, beyond a capacity as a prime mover, that those who forward the argument would find objectionable. He offers the argument that the Holocaust is a punishment for sins, but counters this argument with the example of the murder of one million innocent children. He offers an argument similar to the first argument that is God is like a surgeon, who makes sacrifices of limbs for the good of the body. Since we do not have God’s omniscience we can’t understand how this sacrifice might serve a greater good. Finally, he offers the theory of some who suggest the suffering of the Holocaust portends the coming of the Messiah. Christians might add the second coming. Each of these theories brings students into a complicated relationship with their own faith.

The role of theology as a way to understand the Holocaust may not prove helpful, but the dance provides a context with which students can join the conversation theologians have left unresolved.

THE FAMILY SECTION

Illustration 56: Wedding ritual, video still from Adam and Eve section of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.

When the lights come up on sixteen dancers clad in clothes of this century, trousers and sweaters on the eight men and light knee-length dresses on the eight women, the story becomes of our time. The sculptural tree has risen, or grown, suspending centered in the stage frame. In addition to reinforcing the notion of time passing, this move creates less density in the lower third of the stage frame, complimenting the lightness of the dancers moving in space during this section.

The movement begins by connecting the silhouette shape of the previous scene, then evolves the movement from jagged grounded attacks to a lighter, more fluid dynamic based in an exploration of circle and rotation. Mills pairs men and women together, fill the stage with variations of rotating movements including double tours,

pirouettes that create a light-hearted and playful scene. Mills forms the couples with an enthusiastically buoyant lift in which the woman jumps into the arms of the man. The run preceding her jump motivates the couple's spin. The floor pattern of the four couples performing this step in canon, following the musical canon, creates two circles, one upstage left, the other downstage right. These circles are later traced by a circle of men upstage and a circle of women downstage, arms clasped overhead, using a folk-dance inspired bouree to the right. These circles in the floor pattern are bisected with a straight line from upstage right to downstage left. Mills uses dancers rolling on the floor, accenting the circle with head rolls in the traveling direction.

Forming these two circles in the floor patterning help Mills establish a sense of community in the dance. The references to folk dancing infuse the scene with a sense of cultural continuity. Although the steps are not culturally specific, the form is familiar. The circle dance genre of folk dances occurs commonly across cultures using dance in community building ritual activity, due in part to the rich symbolic associations of the circle and the skill and form scaffolding the circle supplies to untrained dancers.

Mills uses these folk forms to establish a sense of community. Repetition and canons again give us a sense of time passing. In this case, people fall in love, jumping in the arms of their lovers and spin with delight. Out of this movement, both ritualized and spontaneous, Mills provides images of a wedding. One man and one woman leave their gender's circles and come together kneeling. The group lifts them up as though they were sitting in chairs and parade them around the stage as if dancing the Hora (See Illustration 56). This move contextualizes this community ritual in the Jewish faith.

Mills resisted most culturally specific references in the folk dancing, as did the composer Steve Reich in the melodies of "Tehillim" (Reich, 1982). Reich said:

> No Jewish themes were used for any of the melodic materials. One of the reasons I chose to set Psalms as opposed to parts of the Torah or Prophets is that the oral tradition among Jews in the West for singing Psalms has been lost. (It has been maintained by Yemenite Jews.) This meant that I was free to compose the melodies for 'Tehillim' without a living oral tradition to either imitate or ignore (Reich, 1981).

"Tehillim" explores the spirit of the lost sounds to these sacred texts. Mills similarly discussed the exploration of loss. Mills recounted:

> During the research at Yad Vashem and when we were driving in the bus through the Polish country side, I kept imagining all the villages or shtetls that were completely destroyed, that aren't even on the map any more. I couldn't help thinking about the cultural lives. Families, having children, and I began thinking about Naomi and the life she was leading in Poland before the invasion, how she had married. I decided to connect the daily life and family rituals with the Adam and Eve section as a way of communicating a time when life was good (Mills Interview, 2006).

Mills' movement vocabulary of repetitious circular forms with culturally familiar patterns creates a buoyant section. The bisecting line adds a layer of ambiguity. The movement in this bisecting line contrasts the other movement through dominating low levels. The persistence of the repetitive phrases gave me a sense of cultural continuity. A rolling wave on the floor conjured images of the timelessness of the sea. The tides rise and fall, then rise again, relentless but comforting in its predictability. For others the section was more ominous, Mills recollected, "An audience member suggested the rolling section was like the earth was opening up, starting to crack" (Mills Interview, 2006).

The scene ends as a light from down stage left intensifies. The light amplifies the bisecting line Mills uses throughout the section. The residual stage fog creates a material sculptural presence in the shaft of light. As the light brightens, each dance pair interrupts their dancing to walk downstage to peer into the light. Mills described his imagery this way, "I used the analogy of a train coming down the track at night where you can't see

anything but the light getting brighter and brighter" (Mills Interview, 2006). With a sudden burst, the dancers break at the knees in a backward hinge with their arms extended to the side. The mood in the dance changes with this shift. Mills' created this movement imagery inspired by a Kenneth Cole advertisement (See Illustration 57).

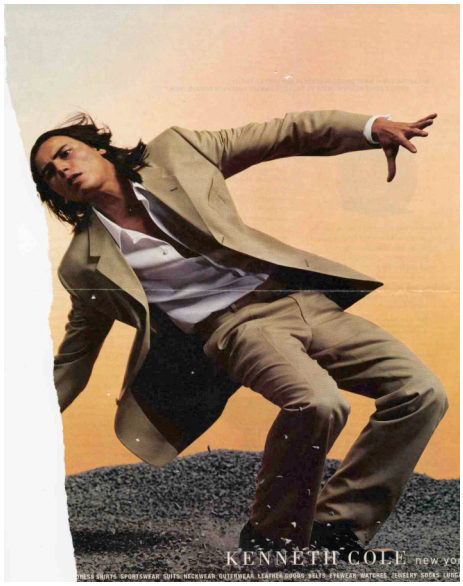

Illustration 57: Magazine advertisement tearsheet inspiring Mills' movement

He interpreted the image as shifting ground. He continued: "People's rights changed from one day to the next. One day they could own a business, the next day they couldn't. One day they could be married to a non-Jewish person, the next day they couldn't" (Interview 2006). Mills combines the intensifying light with a sudden disorienting movement to create a sense of disruption. As the dancers congregate within the shaft of light, the disruptive movement phrase repeats, then returns to a sense relative calm, as the dancers stand upright. The man playing the groom in the wedding places his hand on the shoulder of his bride as the lights fade.

Pedagogical Opportunities: Life Before the War

Exploring the rich cultural life of Europe and specifically European Jewry before the Holocaust provides rich content for students to understand the complexities of the loss of lives. Shulamit Imber, pedagogic director at the International School for Holocaust Studies at Yad Vashem told our class of International Educators this context was important for students to understand the magnitude of the lives lost (Imber in conversation, 2005). She suggested that a presentation of rich cultural, spiritual, economic, and intellectual life personalizes the loss. Students must come to understand the loss, not only in terms of numbers, but also in terms of unrealized hopes and dreams. This section of the dance provides an opening to talk about life before the Holocaust - in ordinary terms – falling in love, getting married, making community.

Pedagogical Opportunities: Anti-Semitism

By including the Jewish wedding ritual dance, Mills opens space for students to discuss the complexities of Jewish secular and religious life and the role of Anti-Semitism in the Holocaust. Schweber discovered in her research of Holocaust Education teaching practice that "In order to make the Jews seem 'normal' to the students, in order to make Jewish people from history seem like those in the present, the history of anti-Semitism was overlooked or bypassed" (2004, p. 103).

The history of anti-Semitism in Europe is long. Totten suggests students must come to understand this long history of anti-Semitism in order to understand, not only the social and political climate that allowed the Holocaust to occur, but a deeper sense of the historical forces. Otherwise he suggests students "walk away with a skewed view of the chronology and the history of the period" (Totten, 2002, p. 54).

Raul Hilberg traces the three phases of the historical narrative including conversion, expulsion and annihilation this way:

> The missionaries of Christianity had said in effect: You have no right to live among us as Jews. The secular rulers who followed had proclaimed: You have no right to live among us. The German Nazis at last decreed: You have no right to live (Hilberg, 1985, p. 9).

Short and Reed (2004) recommend students contextualize these shifts historically by understanding the roots of anti-Semitism from Roman times. They suggest students be made aware that "during the Middle Ages Jews were accused, across the continent, of poisoning wells and utilizing the blood of Christian babies to bake Passover matzoth and that Jews were expelled from many European countries beginning with England in 1290" (p. 41). Helpful primary source material includes sections of the *Justinian Code, Las Siete Partidas, Laws on Jews* (1265) and Martin Luther's *On the Jew and their Lies* (1543). It might be helpful for students to see examples of badges Jews were required to wear in some European countries following the orders of Pope Innocent II's decree of 1215 (See Illustration 58). These documents and artifacts help students understand the discrimination against the Jews, including restrictive laws, ghettoizing, and public marking was not unique to the Nazi period.

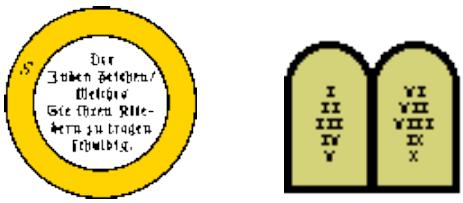

Illustration 58: Medieval French required Jews to wear a circle shaped badge while the English required a badge depicting stone tablets.

Bauman (1989) cautions anti-Semitism might not be the primary contributing factor of the Holocaust. If anti-Semitism were the primary cause, he argues, more examples like the Holocaust would exist throughout the long history of anti-Semitism. He suggests that anti-Semitism be understood as a conditional factor rather than a precipitating one. As a conditional factor, anti-Semitism provided a hostile environment in which the Nazi's could use a "combination of intimidation and legislation to create a mood of hostility toward Germany's Jews, a kind of open season for abuse" (Bergen 2003, p. 60).

Just as in the dance the light shining becomes more and more intense, ultimately causing the dancers to hinge backwards as though the ground were shifting, so does the discriminatory practices of the government grow in intensity, resulting in "ground shifting" actions of economic boycott or legislation. Michael Berenbaum (1993) offers a useful frame to guide students through increased legislation passed by the Nazis to define, isolate, exclude and segregate German Jews (p. 22).

The dance creates a pedagogical space in which students can explore the ways in which subtle shifts of change compound in devastating ways. While the body can recover from each disruptive shift, the combined effect remains a light in the distance. I am

reminded in this scene of the question students often ask about why the Jews didn't leave during the first signs of trouble. Holocaust testimonies are filled with stories of how they thought the mounting restrictions imposed through legislation would pass with new leaders in government. I imagine the movement in this section might provide a visual metaphor to aid students in their interpretation of the Holocaust testimony recounting reasons for not leaving. As survivor Yitzhak Zuckerman said, "Who could have understood in that first moment, that from the white and blue armbands with the Shield of David – that from that Band of Shame – a straight line would extend directly to Treblinka" (quoted in Rapoport, 2002, p. 38). The next scene, Targets Behind Doors builds on these themes.

THE TARGETS BEHIND DOORS SECTION

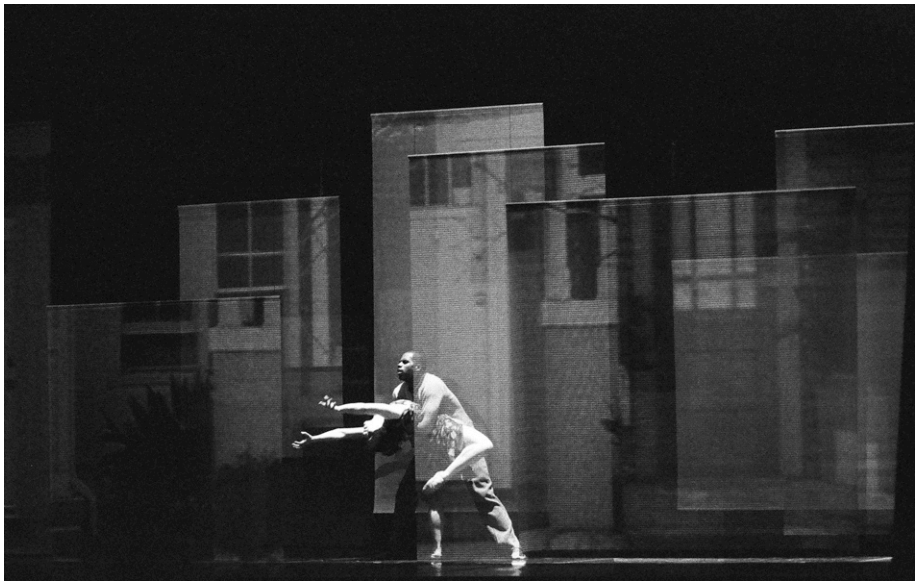

Illustration 59: Dancers in Targets Behind Doors. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

In this scene, four couples dance a series of duets behind a layering of screens. The screens of different dimensions are hung at different levels and depths on the stage. The effect of the variations produces silhouette resembling a skyline. Windows and doors project on the panels with a similar variety of shape and size. The images do not represent a particular time or place beyond generalized modern and European-based references. Mills suggested, "If you're wondering what's happening in the village, you have to wonder what's happening behind closed doors" (Mills, Interview, 2007). Mills literally shows us what might be happening behind closed doors as the four couples dance behind these screens, always partially obstructed.

The first couple, a man and woman of different races, begin the duet in an embrace from which the woman collapses in his arms with her head thrown back. She performs a series of recoveries and collapses, often with her hand on her forehead, circling his body. Through the repetition of this hinge motive Mills begins to incite discomfort. With each collapse and fall, she finds a new position. Each position seems as uncomfortable as the next, causing her to hinge backwards with her full body, recovering in an erect stance facing away from her partner. This recovery marks the first, and only, time the couple does not touch. Running a few feet stage right, she turns toward him and thrusts her arm downstage creating a kind of doorway.. He crosses to her, moving under her arm, as though entering the doorway. In this literal gestural move, Mills reminds us of the choices people were making during the period of identification and discrimination of certain groups. She places her body against his back, her face buried at his shoulders. She follows him, literally blindly, as they move further stage right, behind another screen that further obstructs the sight of their movement. She squats deeply several times in quick succession, as if in preparation for her huge leap into his arms. The next sequence

recapitulates the movement phrases of collapse and recovery established in the opening of the duet. This time however, the moments of recovery stall as the woman freezes momentarily in static positions. The use of stillness here, and throughout the dance, creates a distinct void for the audience. In this circumstance, does the void represent a moment of doubt or indecision? Is it a confrontation with what Langer calls a choice-less choice? In the final stall, the man's touch melts the frozen position as she jumps into his embrace. He holds her off the ground. This time, he circles her body as she clings to his neck.

The next duet features two men. The men enter arm in arm and begin a series of movements requiring counter balances and transference of weight between the couple. They follow this sequence with a series of pirouettes performed in unison. Proximity, touch and simultaneity suggest these characters have an intimate relationship. We assume they are homosexual. Soon one man falls to the floor after a large backward hinge, while the other dances above him, with one leg on either side of the prone body. We recognize this hinge motif established in the shifting ground section. The two men recover and embrace frozen. They quickly separate. The man on the left attempts to reengage their embrace. His partner raises one arm stiffly stopping him, while covering his own mouth in a silencing gesture with his other hand. Again using gestures, Mills suggests one man chooses to reject his partner and observe silence. The sequence creates an allusion to the large number of gays who choose to silence their homosexuality by living heterosexual lives. The man unable to reengage their embrace, hinges backward deeply, as his partner exits stage left.

The third and fourth duets are both performed by a man and a woman of the same race. The movement phrases increase through these movements with increasing energy.

The third duet emphasizes traveling motifs. The composition of the duet travels each side of the stage, employing a variety of locomotor strategies. In one instance, the woman hinges backwards into the arms of the man in a wheelbarrow-like position. They travel stage right in this position with an exaggerated run. In another instance she falls back into the man's lap while her arms circle in axial motions from her shoulder like a wheel. Continuing the travel motif, Mills adds a section based in traveling leaps. He creates a strong traveling motif by exploring running, rolling and flying movement phrases. In the fourth duet, he emphasizes a lack of locomotor and volitional movement. The woman falls into the man, allowing him to move her body in space as though she has no control of her legs. Together they create a weighted duet as he positions and re-positions her body. Her incapacity to travel creates a kind of tension. His devotion to helping her seems anguished.

Together these four duets suggest an increasing intensity. Mills stated:

> The movement is trying to give a sense of anxiety, questioning and uncertainty. Maybe they feel this is a storm to be weathered or maybe they are talking about leaving. At its most obvious, there is a mixed race couple and a gay couple and a third couple. I was trying to present the variety of people persecuted, some obvious and some not obvious (Mills, Interview, 2007).

Mills contrasts the motifs of travel and inertness to emphasize the range of responses people might have to inhospitable environments. Inhospitably towards mixed race couples and gay couples is both a historic and contemporary issue, easily recognized in this scene. However, we are left to wonder about the two other couples. There are no outward signs of membership to a traditionally marginalized group, but it is clear from their furtive movements and anguished gestures, they feel the tensions of a changing world.

Pedagogical Opportunities: Other Victims of the Nazi Regime

Building on the shifting ground scene, *Targets Behind Doors* begins to isolate potential targets of early Nazi discriminatory policies. This scene opens the possibilities for discussions of other victims of the Nazi Regime. The USHMM recommends covering the additional victims of Nazi persecution in order to provide students with a "sense of the breadth of the history of the Holocaust" (USHMM, 2001, p. 17).

In the first section of the dance, we see a mixed race couple dancing with some anxiety. While there was no systematic plan for the elimination of blacks from Germany, the "fate of black people from 1933 to 1945 in Nazi Germany and in German-occupied territories ranged from isolation to persecution, sterilization, medical experimentation, incarceration, brutality, and murder" (USHMM, 2001, n.p.). Friedlander suggests only three groups were targeted for extermination: the handicapped, Jews, and the Romani people (Friedlander, 2000, p. 65). Propaganda campaigns, including Hitler's own writings, positioned blacks as threats to the purity of the Germanic race. This section not only opens a pedagogical space for the discussion of the treatment of different races under the National Socialist party, but also the social construction of race during the period.

Totten (2002) identifies racial construction as a common misconception among students. He suggests students begin to understand the ways the Nazi's used both race and religion to segregate and persecute Jews. As Hilberg (1985) writes, "No group can be killed without a concentration or seizure of the victims, and no victims can be segregated before the perpetrator knows who belongs to the group" (p. 267). The popularity of racial sciences supported the enactment of race-based legislation like the Nuremberg Laws, legally defining the Jews allowing for discrimination, based on the religious practices of

one's parents and grandparents. The combination of religious and racial explanations in these legal constructs allows students to think critically about the social construction of race and the use and misuse of racial vocabulary, particularly in this period.

The second duet, danced my two men, provides a pedagogical space to discuss the victimization of the homosexuals before, during and after the Holocaust. While homosexual behavior was outlawed from the beginning of the German Empire in 1871, the Nazi Party rewrote Paragraph 175 in 1935 to allow increased severity of punishment and broader definitions of criminal behavior. Once convicted under this statute, homosexuals were sent to prison and concentration camps. Survivor testimonies reveal a variety of treatments including forced heterosexual sex and hard labor (Heger, 1994). Homosexuals who survived the Nazi concentration camps were often put back in prison, after the liberation of the camps, to serve the remainder of their sentences for the crime of homosexuality under Paragraph 175 (Grau, 1995). The exploration of this subject provides students an opportunity to see the liberation of camps in more complex ways. Not all groups were free from persecution.

The other two couples remain unidentified from external appearances. Could they be mentally or physically disabled, or Roma or Sinti, or Jehovah's Witnesses, or political dissidents? The ballet leaves this unresolved, allowing students to begin discussions of all groups of people victimized by the Nazi regime. It also allows students an opportunity to discuss how one might know who is a member of that persecuted group. Testimonies provide a rich source of material to explore these issues.

THE ISOLATION AND DEGRADATION SECTION

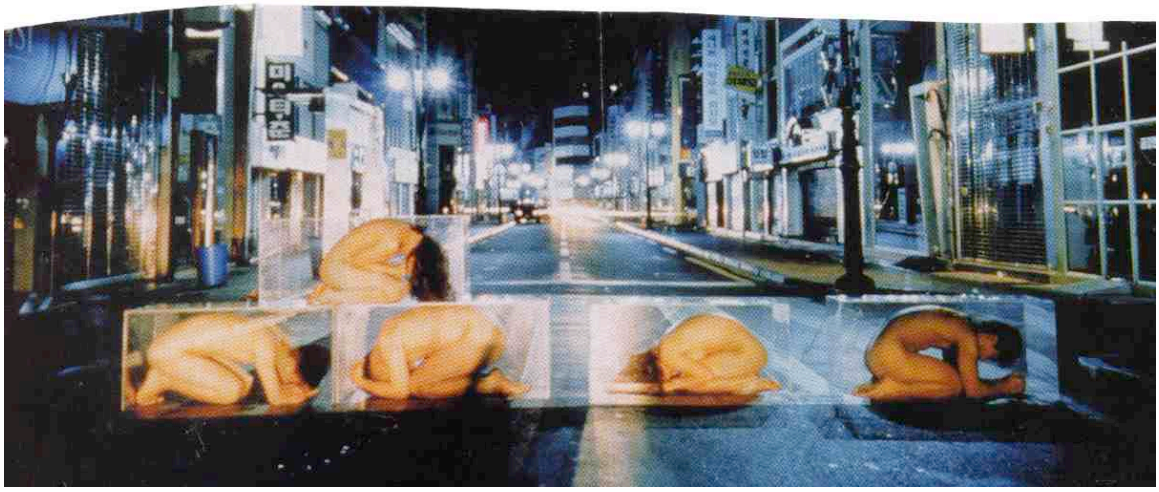

Illustration 60: Magazine tearsheet of photograph by Atta Kim inspiring isolation and degradation imagery.

The movement titled *Isolation and Degradation* explores themes suggested by the title. I focus on a two-minute video clip that illuminates these themes. As the clip begins, each dancer stands in a rectangular pool of light measuring approximately six foot by three foot. The stage is otherwise dark. The pools of light create a physical demarcation and a sense of isolation for each dancer. I could not help but associate their 6x3 size with the size of a coffin. The pattern the light made on the floor reminded me of the memorial quilt made for those who have died of AIDS. These dancers however were alive within these confined spaces.

The woman married in the Family Scene stands in a pool of light down stage left. She beings to take off her dress, as the other dancers slowly turn their heads to look at her. She continues to disrobe, until she is left standing in only her undergarments, white trunks and a sleeveless white t-shirt. While she undresses the other dancers run towards

the back of the stage, holding their arms in the air with their legs spread wide. One woman frozen in this position is lifted and removed from the stage. Mills recounted the vast amount of source material from the period showing "people standing with their arms up against walls. I was trying to give the sense of people getting arrested all sorts of ways" (Interview, 2007). The dancers in the background appear and disappear in the mottled light. They dance in a flat plane repeating a serious of movement phrases in a loosely designed canon. The phrases feature double pirouette turns, a backward hinge with the arms thrown back and a traveling movement that resembles walking a tightrope. For me the turns recapitulate the time passing theme, only this time the speed is increased. Rather than slow rolls of the upper body, the pirouettes are fast and furtive. The repetition of the hinge in this context reinforces the unsettling feeling of dislocation. As the movement continues, the dancers fall into line walking the same imagined tightrope. I could not help but recall the pictures of round-ups and deportations we had seen in our studies.

Moving down the line as a mass, each dancer performs the movement phrases independently, out of unison. Mills hoped the tightrope imagery would communicate a sense of danger and a feeling of being out of balance. Meanwhile, the young woman has separated from the group and entered a somewhat larger light square. She sits down and curls her knees close to her body and begins a rocking motion as if comforting herself. Soon a man joins her, having also removed his clothing down to his undergarments. The effect of the undergarments proves strikingly powerful. In this context it seems to create a greater sense of vulnerability than if they had removed more of their clothes. Underwear serves a symbolic function here that flesh would not. One by one the dancers crowd into this blue pool of light.

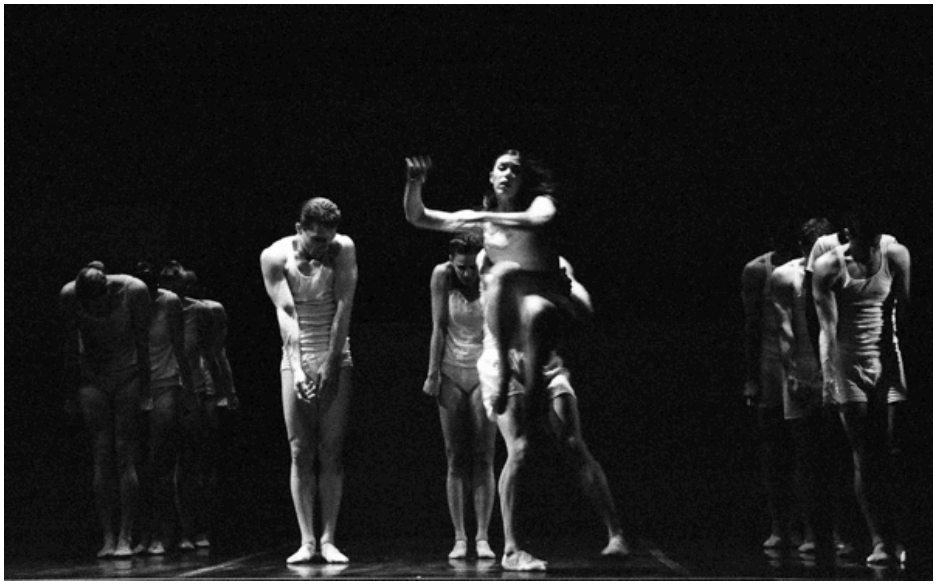

Illustration 61: Characters dressed in undergarments enhances the sense of vulnerability. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

As the dancers increase in the isolated square downstage left, the remaining dancers repeat a canon with increasing ferocity. The dancers drop to the floor, rolling over then recover on their knees. They lock their wrists together as though they've been tied and slash their arms towards their hips, first left, then right, then repeating the sequence. This sequence continues as the dancers stand finally resolving the movement in a small jump, hands behind the back, looking up to the sky.

Mills suggests the boxes represent both physical and emotional spaces. First with economic and political sanctions, then ghettos, Jews were physically isolated. Testimonies suggest breaking up families and routines created forms of mental isolation as well. Mills uses the disrobing to communicate ways in which degradation serves as a controlling technique. Mills suggested, "I used exposure as a way of talking about

degradation so the woman is the first to disrobe. I imagined she was undressing with a soldier watching her " (Interview, 2007).

Pedagogical Opportunities: Expropriation and the Ghetto

Mills combines controlled and confined space, the iconography of criminality and the removal of clothing to create a sense of the expropriation and ghettoization stages many victims faced. The dance does not handle this period with specificity. We do not see specific markers of economic hardships, or exclusion from activities like school or business, we only see dance in a contained space. The audience must bring their understanding of the particulars to this metaphor. The audience is left to consider on their own the role the ghettos played in isolating the Jews and building political allegiances with non-Jews through the redistribution of confiscated property. Mills helps us make connections by adding the iconic image of arrest to suggest activities outside these small, contained spaces are criminal. He continues to reinforce the precariousness of the constantly changing political and economic landscape Jews faced during the early period of the Nazi regime. Mills does not outline the diverse ways in which the victims of the Holocaust suffered degrading circumstances; instead he uses the single gesture of undressing to convey the emotion. The audience must explore the historical specifics of the period.

THE BOXCAR SECTION

Illustration 62: The Boxcar Scene. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Sirens blast unrelentingly. Michael Gordon's "Weather Three" layers siren sounds into a shrill and threatening composition. The stage is dark except for the ten by ten foot square pool of blue light filled with dancers huddled together on the ground in their underwear. The blue light suggested to me the light of the moon. In the twelve minutes it takes to perform this section the dancers move from stage left to stage right. The journey is painful.

As the scene opens, the crowded figures crawl over each other, desperate for space. The dancers link arms, forming a huddled mass, leaning outwards as if straining to breathe while the mass slowly revolves clockwise. The dancers use the weight of each

others' bodies to work their way to the floor, assuming a tableaux image of a pile of bodies with arms frozen reaching towards the sky (See Illustration 57). This image resembles the sculptural image of the victims of the gas chambers on display at the USHMM, Auschwitz and Yad Vashem. However, this specific reference is not necessary for the interpretation of the horrific silhouette of suffering. The frozen tableaux adds to the intensity of the frame. The tableaux makes emblems of the suffering, distilling it to its essence in a single visual frame. By providing emblems of suffering rather than examples, the audience can apply the image to multiple contexts and multiple cases of individual suffering. Holocaust testimony suggests the experience of suffering differed vastly among the victims of the Nazi regime. In the stillness, we see these twelve dancers as emblematic of many more. The mind fills the void with countless other images and stories of victimization. The power of the stillness makes me wonder if movement cannot contain the magnitude of suffering. In this way Wiesel's plea for the dancer to stand motionless becomes realized. Not just to show the loss of potential, but to show the loss of vocabulary.

In the tableaux, Mills embeds subtle internal references. The shape of the hands that reach toward the sky recreate the shape of the hands with splayed fingers used in the Adam and Eve Section (See Illustration 55 on p. 208). In this way, Mills suggests the image of suffering contains elements that are "disturbingly universal" by linking this display of suffering with a creation myth (Steinfeldt, 2002, p. 10). Technically, Mills reinforces this internal connection by recapitulating movement phrases throughout the section. The arched back in Illustration 54 on p. 207, becomes a recurring motif as bodies struggle against the confines of the square.

In this scene Mills assembles a pastiche of iconic images. We see one dancer facing upstage pointing with stylized lunges to the right and to the left in an iconic gesture of the selection process at Auschwitz/ Birkenau. Naomi tells of two lines in her testimony, as she and her sister are separated from their mother and their youngest sister. As the two lines are formed, the dancer jumps, turns and falls to the ground with his arms slashing out to the sides. As he lands on the ground, the two lines of dancers fall to punctuate the gesture. We come to see that the separation was meaningless, that all would eventually fall, except one. In this case, the survivor character walks over the man and begins shuddering as though she were cold. The other dancers join her in a line, shivering. Mills used the memorial image in Plaszow as inspiration (See Illustration 65).

Illustration 63: Memorial Sculpture at site of the Plaszow Camp. Photograph by author.

As the scene develops, images appear on the back wall. The projections of trees and buildings scatter across the wall as though seen from a moving train. Clouds race by, birds race by, but nothing stays long enough for the eye to rest. Meanwhile, bodies leap

into the center of the huddled mass of dancers, passed from hand to hand, dissolving back into the mass until the next body leaps onto the pile. Again Mills uses iconic Holocaust images to particularize the story. Mills said, "I kept thinking of the pictures of piles of dead bodies at Buchenwald" (Mills Interview, 2006). As the sirens blare, we see all too familiar images from the Holocaust frozen in our frame coupled with recapitulations of images from earlier in the dance. For example, the hinge movement doesn't restore in this scene, the bodies continue to fall backward on to the pile of bodies. The hinge motif becomes a metaphor for disruption, in this scene without recovery. As Langer describes, this device also functions in a poetic corollary, "…because metaphor is the heart of verse, finding similitudes for the incomparable becomes not only a challenge for the poet, but often a condition for the internal dynamics of the poem itself" (Langer, 1995, p. 535). In this way, Mills sets up both internal references and iconic references against his use of tableaux and stillness to communicate the paradox of Holocaust representation, the inexpressibility of the subject and the ease with which the subject seems to be comprehended, at least superficially.

Illustration 64: Men passing through women in a "death-life" state. Video still from *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.

Later in the movement, we see Mills take the objectification of the body from death-like figures to an even more complicated state Langer has termed "death-life" (Langer, 2006, 1998). The scene begins with bodies being placed on top of bodies. Four couples share down stage right, engaging in a series of entangled embraces, the men lifting and moving the women like displacing objects. The women, in turn, use the men as bridges, walking over their backs to reach their destinations. Soon the lifts become throws, during which the women are tossed from man to man. Downstage one man lifts the leg of a woman in a strained embrace. After several counts of stillness the man leaves the woman supporting herself on one leg, with her raised leg frozen in the air bent at the knee, in attitude a la second. She holds that strained position for a painfully long time. The impossibly awkward position highlights a body disengaged from the woman. By

creating this image of the living in a death like state, Mills explores manifestations of death-life.

Bodies are passed among the partners, often raised high above their heads, or flipped to the side. The bodies shift from human to object. The section ends in a pas de six, during which Mills positions two women standing erect with a lifeless gaze. The four men, positioned on the ground, alternately pass through the women's legs as they are moved across the stage by their ankles. The men literally pass through the bodies of the women. The men passing though the open legs of the women might be a metaphor for rape. The men might be a metaphor for death passing through the living. Jorge Semprun expresses the sensation this way, "that I have not escaped death, but passed through it. Rather: that it has passed through me. That, in a way, I have lived through it" (Langer, 2006, p. vii/ Semprun, 1997, p. 14-15).

Pedagogical Opportunities: Transport, Objectification and Conceptions of Resilience

The Boxcar Section provides students ample material for discussion. The opening section opens the possibility to talk about the conditions of transport that many suffered. Testimonies suggest the train cars were packed tightly, with no fresh water or sanitary facilities. Victims were often locked in the cars for many days and some victims of the transport did not survive the experience. Mills presents the essence of those stories in his opening movement of this segment of the ballet. The movement illustrates the horrors. Langer describes for fiction that which occurs here in dance, "Holocaust fiction makes vivid for us the discomforts that were part of the daily ordeal of its victims, who have lost their heroic roles" (Langer, 1995, p. 236).

As the images of pain and death compound, the loss of heroicism becomes painful as we witness people turned into objects. Mills ventures into territory often silenced by

our desires to imbue the victims with maximum available dignity. In our attempts to maintain the dignity of the victims, or maybe to comfort ourselves, Holocaust histories and fiction typically focus on the resilient survivor. Here Mills shows us figures with less resilience. He shows us figures in death-life. In the camps, these victims were sometimes called Muselmann. Some think the term Muselmann was given to victims in a starving death-life state because as they fell to ground they looked like Muslims at prayer (Rapoport, 2002). Max Brenner, a survivor and artist who spoke at the Professional Development Institute for Teachers, included references to his friend Marvin who committed suicide. Max suggested Marvin could not live with the pain of his experiences. By asking students to consider the full range of experiences, we provide a more realistic view of the Holocaust experience.

THE ASHES SECTION

Illustration 65: Ashes Section. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

The Ashes Section of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* suggests themes of the camp experience. In this analysis I will focus on two movements within the twenty-six minute section, I describe these as the roll call movement and the circle movement.

Eight dancers, practically nude, dance the roll call movement. The men wear flesh colored trunks and the women wear leotards with bare legs. A white wall of about eight feet in height runs the length of the stage. Above that frame, the back wall of the theater lays bare. The stage is lighted from the sides in a blue wash. The blue-lit wall surrounded by darkness produces a visual effect of confining the performance space. On the back wall are shadowy projections of people standing in a row. The spare confined space inhabited by nearly naked bodies creates a cold and vulnerable impression.

Mills weaves emblems of iconic images to contextualize camp life. He begins the movement with dancers rushing through a frantic sequence of rushed embraces followed by moments of lasting hugs. The extended images of comfort become punctuated with the furtive moments where time does not seem to allow a lasting embrace. Two bodies, locked in an embrace, roll towards the center of the stage. Another man holds the body of a woman. The comfort is revoked. Soon all the dancers fall center stage with one hand extended. The pile of bodies reminds me of the images of bodies we saw documented at Buchenwald. Mills does not let the audience linger in death here. As the Phillip Glass music propels us forward, the dancers rise from the pile to stand in a line downstage, their arms to their side and feet spread apart. Their heads fall back at the neck in unison and every other dancer walks backward to form a second line. The projection of bodies on the back wall creates the sensation that the lines continue back in greater numbers. The dancers shack their lower limbs as if shivering in the cold. Mills creates an emblem of the

roll call rather than a recreation of the roll call. The dancers begin an anguished sequence of contractions as they rotate around a fixed foot on the stage floor. One at a time, dancers fall to one knee, their arms folded as though they are embracing themselves, then fall to the second knee, then to a hip, and finally to the floor, as though collapsing or dying. Again Mills does not let us linger long in the death, as the dancers return upright and begin the section again. As dancers fall and rise, slowly the static projections on the back wall begin to move, echoing the collapsing movement of the dancers on stage. Occasionally a dancer will break the falling cycle to run backwards in a clockwise circle holding one hand over their mouth as if in horror or repulsion.

In the repetition and the projection Mills moves us towards a sense of scale. As quickly as eight dancers fall, eight more take their place, over and over again. That number becomes multiplied by the shadow of images projected in the background. Mills said of the projected images, "I was trying to bring in the imagery of the identification cards and convey the sense of objectifications that comes when people are just numbers" (Interview 2007). The shadows projected on the wall vaguely resemble the dancers on stage, but the audience remains uncertain. Finally, the dancers return to the roll call line. This time, in concert with the violins of Glass' score, the dancers drop their chins, heads, shoulders, upper backs, and torsos, becoming more and more suppliant, until they are all in a squatting position. This squatting position resembles a statue we encountered near the officers quarters of the Little Prison at Terezin (See Illustration 66). The dancers remain still in this position, an emblem of forced submission. After a full seven seconds of stillness, all the dancers fall to the ground, except one. She remains motionless, with images of clouds floating above the white wall. Slowly she rises and stands erect and

begins to repeat the movement phrase in half time. Her slowness makes me wonder if this is an act of remembrance.

Illustration 66: Statue on the grounds in front of the officer's quarters outside the prison camp at Terezin. Photograph by author.

The next movement represents the final moments of the Ashes Section. The movement opens with six dancers tracing the outline of a ten-foot circle of light. The dancers trace the circle counter-clockwise. Mills was inspired to create this image by a magazine clipping found in his tearsheet file (See Illustration 67).

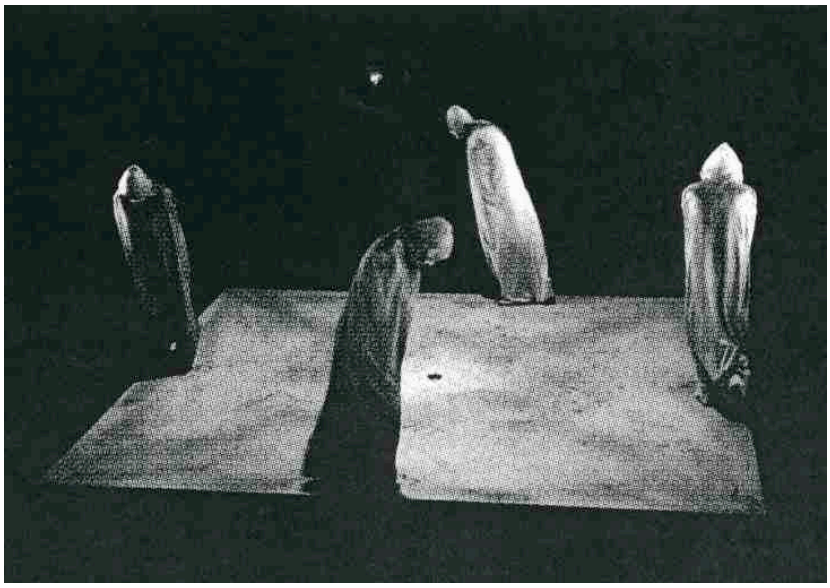

Illustration 67: Tearsheet image from Mills' idea board

The movement focuses on the central character's struggle through this experience. Mills described the loose plot structure this way, "Naomi, like many others, went into camp with her family, but many of them died. One by one each dancer steps out onto the circle like they are stepping into the circle of life. When she is about to give up, they come to help her" (Mills, Interview 2007). The woman's movement during this section is labored. Often she lays motionless on the floor and is physically manipulated by dancers from the circle. Finally one man helps her to her feet. As they walk upstage, she collapses in his arms. He helps her restore. As they continue walking, she collapses and restores three more times. He takes her in his arms in a gesture of comfort (See Illustration 68).

Illustration 68: Ashes Section. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Soon, he helps her stand on her own. In a solo, Mills recapitulates the hinge movement, however through several attempts she collapses with its weight. Another man enters the circle to assist her. When she returns to her feet, she begins the falling movement phrase from the roll call section, first one knee, then the other then her hip then to the floor. The hard edge of the circle of light begins to dim as the dancers move towards offstage. Each makes a gesture to her before they exit (See Illustration 69).

Illustration 69: Ashes Section. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

Finally the young woman is left alone in the arms of the man. He comforts her and restores her to her feet and leaves as well. Left alone, she begins to run in a circle tracing the line where the light once shone. Her circle becomes smaller and smaller until she is standing center stage slowly spinning on her own axis. The old woman, seen periodically throughout the dance, joins her. They stare into each other's eyes, and the young woman collapses in her arms. For Mills, this moments attempts to represent the kind of internal dialogue old survivors must have with themselves as they attempt to reconcile the experiences of their past or young survivors must have with themselves as they attempt to imagine their future. The scene ends as the woman, represented by two dancers in different stages of their life, stand together, alone.

Pedagogical Opportunities: Empathy for Life in the Camps

Mills creates emblems to communicate life in the camps. In this way, the dance provides opportunities to describe some of the external realities of life in the camp, such

as roll call, or degrading experiences, or submissions and resistance, or death. But these emblems often act as "stand-ins" for intense emotional experiences. The challenge of Holocaust education resides in how to discuss these internal experiences. Words might not be able to contain the complexity of the emotional experience. As Ellsworth suggests, "It is a way of knowing that is not susceptible to explanation" (Ellsworth, 2005, p. 156). Some scholars use psychoanalytic approaches to explain the problematic ways in which students might either repress or project their second hand encounter with the traumatic information (Britzman, 2004; Morris 2001). Whether a psychological barrier or a representational barrier, the dance might offer an emotional entry point that resists simulation and offers a psychologically distancing mediation. The liminal space of the performance might provide a place between experience and the imagination that provides students an opportunity to come closer to understanding the experience from a respectful distance.

THE HUSH SECTION

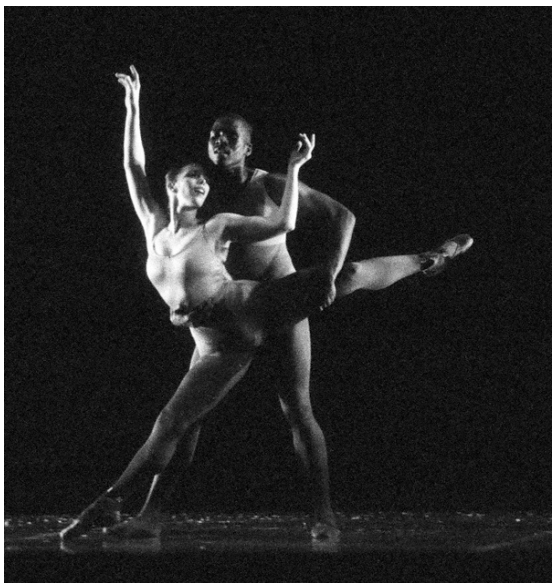

Illustration 70: Hush Section. Photograph by Hannah Neal.

The final section of *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* is the most abstract of the dance, and looks the most like ballet. The movement begins with the music playing in darkness. Soon two dancers appear dressed in blue unitards, graduating in color from dark blue at the feet to a lighter blue towards the upper body. In many ways the gradation resembles th*e Light Project* Logo (See Illustration 72 on p. 243). The dancer's duet begins stage left with a lyrical partnering phrase built around a low lift in which the man holds the woman at waist height and turns clockwise. Mills recapitulates the turning phrase to emphasize the passing of time, in this case rather than grounded examples of the turn, they float off the ground. The dancers are soon joined by another, similarly dressed, couple downstage left. They dance in unison, performing a variation of the backward hinge movement. Here the partner supports the back of the dancer performing the hinge. Mills suggest here that while "ground shifts" still occur, the

recovery from them is assisted with the help of another person. As the dance progresses, Mills adds more couples until the stage is populated with eight dancers. Throughout the movement Mills combines a complex combination of canon and partnering to create a polifocal scene. Mills does not reduce the complexity of the dancing on stage to a single focal point, but rather -- like life -- creates a more complex scene. By constantly reordering the relationships among dancers, the audience follows one group of four then a different combination, as the dancers fall in and out of phrases of the canon and moments of unison.

Mills uses sweeping movement patterns during this section, contrasting the grounded or bounded patterns in earlier sections. The sweeping patterns create a feeling of lightness to this section that is amplified by his use of mid-level and high-level movements. Mills limits the use of floor work for the dancers in this section. As the section resolves, the dancers adopt a more pedestrian stance, often walking and holding hands. In this final segment, Mills slows the speed of the duets, asking dancers to remain in their coupled relationships. He recapitulates many of the movement phrases established in the opening duet of the Adam and Eve scene. This connection creates a resolution to the dance, but creates an opening for the narrative by returning us, changed, to the beginning.

In many ways, Mills offers this section as an opportunity for the audience to process the earlier sections of dance. The beauty of the dance and the beauty of the Phillip Glass "Tirol Concerto, 2nd Movement" counterbalance the trauma of earlier sections. Mills does not link, through a recapitulation of movement phrases, the experiences of trauma and this restorative section. In this way, he does not make the false analogy that good can come from suffering or lead the audience to believe that good

necessarily triumphs. Rather than redeeming or eradicating the trauma, Mills simply provides a contrast to the trauma. The feeling suggests hopefulness. Mills seems to suggest hopefulness simply because hope exists, not because hope always follows destruction. By referring to movement patterns in the Adam and Eve section, the hopefulness seems derived from an enduring human capacity rather than as a response to specific experiences.

Pedagogical Opportunities: Life after Liberation

During the first meeting between Naomi Warren and Stephen Mills, I remember Naomi leaned across the table and said something like "you must talk about hope" (April 2004). This section provides the audience hope. Despite our understanding of the atrocities of the Holocaust presented in this work, Mills suggests we can be hopeful that we can still recognize beauty, lives can continues, and a rebuilding process can occur. Just as Mary Lee insisted a balance of positive and negative images be present in the *Footnotes*, Mills strived for a similar balance in the dance.

Mills establishes the sense of repopulation through the addition of couples in this section. First one couple, then two, then four. As the dance progresses we begin to imagine the ways in which communities began to reestablish themselves. I am reminded of the tribute I made for Naomi that recounted her story of returning to Auschwitz victorious because she had her family with her. She had left as one person and returned as fifteen. In this way, the Hush section illustrates one survivor's personal tale of victory.

One audience member asked if the blue costuming represented Israel. While Mills had not made that connection, he found it a fitting interpretation. Much of the allusion and references in this section remain open. Mills resisted closure for several reasons. First, Mills respected the variety of personal experiences of survivors and was reluctant to

close possible identifications by presenting to specific a narrative ending. Secondly, Mills resisted ending the story to reinforce the lack of absolute resolve in the ongoing story of genocide.

Langer suggests this resistance to closure runs through Holocaust literature. He suggests, "The closure we expect of narrative – in the form of insight, reconciliation, maturity or moral triumph – never appears…. the rhythms of this literature remain cropped, jagged, and unresolved, and its endings signify no arrival but merely another invitation to depart" (Langer, 1995, p. 238).

This section of the dance provides an opportunity for students to discuss the variety of experiences after liberation, including the forming of Israel. It also provides an aesthetic moment in which the students have an opportunity to resolve their own experiences vis a vis the events of the performance. This section provides time to process, mourn and make sense of the magnitudes of the Holocaust.

Chapter Eight: Concluding Discussions

RESONANCE

Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project convened a community conversation about the issues of bigotry and hate. In so doing, the project met its primary obligation. As an act of the deep politic, the project allowed me to question some of the embedded social structures that promote or constrain those conversations. I learned much about the Holocaust, the nature of partnerships, the role of an academic in the community, and the nature of transdisciplinary learning. I learned much about myself. Moving towards the deep politic is personal and public.

AMPLIFICATIONS WITHIN TRANSDISCIPLINARY PARTNERSHIPS

As each discipline interacts with others within transdisciplinary projects, amplifications occur. The *Light Project* case suggests some ways in which the arts, education and civic practices interacted and resulted in a change or amplification of practices within each discipline. This suggests transdisciplinary work might provide benefits for the practitioners of the work, not only the learners who are traditionally mentioned in the advocacy of interdisciplinary work.

The following section highlights examples of amplifications found in the case.

Art and Civic Activities Amplify the Educational Activity

Light /The Holocaust and Humanity Project employed a community integration design (Webeck & Hasty, 2006). Community integration features an alignment of school and community based activities around a similar topic, the inclusion of multiple forms of representation, a transdisciplinary approach to the issue, and setting activities in anomalous places of learning.

In this design, activities in schools are aligned with activities across the community. In the example of this case, we arranged Holocaust education activities while students were studying the Holocaust in schools. Through this alignment, students and their families, schools and their neighborhoods would be thinking about, and learning about similar issues. Citizens of Austin, young and old, would be learning about these issues through dance, and visual arts and a series of community forums.

Another feature of the design included the use of multiple forms of representation. In the case, the use of text, movement, visual art and music enriched the program design. Each form of representation brought new information to the study of the Holocaust and the issues of intolerance.

The *Light Project* combined the disciplines of art, education and civics to approach its inquiry. By bringing together multiple disciplines, practitioners of each discipline have an opportunity to think about their work in new ways. The interplay of multiple disciplines provides multiple entry points for participation. In the case of the *Light Project*, art, education and civic dialogue amplified the possibilities of understanding, either by giving people different kinds of experiences or by giving them combinations of experiences that provided new insight.

Finally, the *Light Project* located its activities in anomalous places of learning. By holding activities in places like Auditorium Shores, museums and in concert halls, not traditionally thought of as educational venues, people have an opportunity to experience learning in fresh ways.

Art and Education Activities Amplify the Civic Activity

Mayor Wynn stated the civic challenge the *Light Project* faced very clearly:

> "The lesson for Austin is: we have to work to protect the rights, the dignity and fundamentally the voices of everyone. From a local standpoint, we have to make democracy work. In order for democracy to work we have to talk. If we talk, we have to make sure everybody's voice is heard. There are a lot of people in this world, certainly in this country, and I'm embarrassed to say, even in this city, that feel they don't have a voice. So the challenge for us is: how do we empower a voice, so that individuals or a group of people feel like they have a voice in this thing we call democracy (Wynn, Interview, 2005).

The *Light Project* attempted to bring together art, education and civic practices to provide spaces for voice and increased civic engagement. Carlborg, Korza & Schaffer-Bacon (2005) provide a useful framework to examine the ways in which the *Light Project* amplified civic dialogue. The qualities for successful civic engagement include: an increased sense of self-efficacy to take action; engaged civic leaders and citizens; contribution to public discourse; expanded participation; increased access; enhanced

public awareness; and shifts in attitude about an issue. The following explicates the degree to which the *Light Project* met these criteria.

Increased sense of self-efficacy to take action

The leadership of the *Light Project* accomplished a lot, quickly. While many of the team had experience with this kind of project scale, many of us did not. The sense of personal capacity to take action can be seen to resonate after the project. Ballet Austin has introduced two new educational works on social justice themes, *Walking the Choctaw Trail* and *The Monologue Project* as a result of the success of the *Light Project*. Alan Potash, a partner with the ADL, convened a regional Holocaust education working group, which recently produced the second *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* Professional Development Institute for Teachers. The Coexistence Exhibit encouraged other artists to create similar themed work including the White Buffalo Project. Of course, our sense of self-efficacy did not always result in taking action. During a statewide campaign to ratify a constitutional amendment banning gay marriage or any similar union, our group convened to draft a letter to the editor in opposition of this amendment. The piece was never written.

Engaged civic leaders and citizens

The *Light Project* engaged civic leaders. The Chairs, Executive Steering Committee and the Advisory Committee represent some of the most influential leaders in state and local government, education, business and the arts (See Figure 8). Continued activism on the part of some suggests the commitment remained durable for a few leaders. The forming of the Holocaust educational working group by Potash and the

production of a second Professional development Institute by Webeck and Hasty, and Meredith's funding of several genocide related programs provide evidence.

It is difficult to assess the engagement of the citizenry as a result of this project.

Contribution to public discourse

The *Light Project* served as a model for the practice of public discourse. The city government now convenes neighborhood forums to discuss quality of life issues within traditionally African American and Hispanic communities. While the city often used this practice in times of turmoil, they now institute these practices frequently and regularly, during peaceful times.

Contribution to pubic discourse was limited in post-performance dialogues. Further investigation would be required to understand if the more time or a change of location would impact the quality of conversations held in these situations.

Expanded participation

The *Light Project* expanded participation for Ballet Austin. Ruiz suggested the project "introduced us to wonderful people in the community we had not had a relationship with prior to the project" (Interview, 2005). In addition to the patrons who were introduced to the ballet for the first time as audience members, a number I cannot quantify in this report, the project cultivated new donors to the ballet. Not only have some continued their ongoing support of the ballet through ticket sales and annual gifts; Tom and Lynn Meredith, and Lily and Egal Saad made significant contributions to the Ballet Austin Capital Campaign Fund. Neither couple had a significant funding relationship with Ballet Austin prior to the *Light Project*.

Increased access

Increased access as a result of the *Light Project* proves difficult to assess. Certainly the public nature of the art exhibit meant many people engaged with the project that might not have otherwise. Similarly, people attended the ballet to see this production, particularly from the Jewish community, who might not have attended otherwise. But the topic of the Holocaust might have decreased access for some. Just as some leaders encouraged us to drop the Holocaust theme for the project design, its inclusion might have created a barrier to access.

Enhanced public awareness

The *Light Project* created dialogue. As Steve Adler suggested, "For two months our community, many in our community, were having conversations about the role of intolerance in our world" (Interview 2005). The nature of the outdoor exhibit and the public performance generated a buzz that brought attention to the issue. The location of the art exhibit, on a very well trafficked site on Auditorium Shores, coupled with the increased traffic as a result of the South by Southwest Festival positioned the issue in a public way.

With features on the cover of the weekly culture insert of the Austin American Statesman, the media response to the events further amplified the impact of the project activities.

Shifts in attitude about an issue

I have no evidence of shifts in attitudes as a result of the *Light Project*. The data suggests flashes of possibilities but these remained outside the scope of this investigation.

These examples drawn from the case suggest the *Light Project* measured some success in the amplification of civic engagement through the arts and education efforts.

Civic and Education Activities Amplify The Artistic Activity

Mills, the dancers, designers and staff suggested the *Light Project* represented the first time they had spent so much preparation time on the creation of a new work. In addition to Mills' extensive research, the other participating artists engaged in significant education through discussion groups, attending lectures and forming their own study group. This self-initiated learning had not happened at the organization before, or since.

Mills described the way it brought the artists together this way:

> Light brought the people of the organization together in a very beautiful way. Everyone was working towards the same end knowing the gravity of the task and the importance of success. After the project was over there was a great deal of pride knowing that the city had become so involved and that we and our partners had convened something that had never been done before. How long lasting it will be is yet to be seen. It's a little like 9/11 in the sense that the country came together for a common goal, but the camaraderie of that time has dissipated (Mills, Personal communication, February 2007).

Reginald Harris, one of the dancers thanked me for the project. He said he never felt like he could do something so important through his art. He didn't have much money or status as a young performer. He was just an artist. He said he understood now what an artist could contribute (Personal communication, April 2005). As a result of his work on the *Light Project*, Harris saw a new role for himself as an artist who could participate in civic life through his dancing.

In this case, education informed the aesthetic of the work. Mills' understanding of Holocaust history and representation allowed him to develop an operating aesthetic that served the production well. He drew from the conversations within the education community to inform the creation of the work. The educational and civic gravity of the

project encouraged the artists to new practices. The artists prepared more and differently, and the resulting artistic product excelled as a result.

Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project received positive reviews from the critics. Sondra Lomax of the Austin American Statesman reported:

> Wisely avoiding clichés or Nazi imagery, director Stephen Mill's stunning production at Bass Concert Hall focused on universal themes of alienation and inhumanity. The concert last week also marked Ballet Austin's most ambitious — and successful venture in linking extraordinary art and social consciousness.
>
> *Light* is a masterful exposition on one of history's darkest episodes. Visually and emotionally gripping, this abstract ballet segued from dawn-of-humanity inklings and communal celebrations into cruelty and despair, before culminating with hope and optimism (Lomax, April 4, 2005)

Similar sentiments were echoes in Robert Faires review in the Austin Chronicle. Both reviewers commented on the minimal qualities of the movement and design in contributing to an effective performance free of stereotypical imagery. The production received three awards from the 2005 Austin Critics Table including Best Dance Production of the Year, Best Choreography, and Best Female Dancer. The *Light Project* was also listed on all three major arts critic's lists for top ten arts events of the year.

CATALYZING FORCE OF LEADERS

To the extent *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* achieved success as a project and a partnership rests in the ability of individuals to catalyze ideas, community groups and resources to achieve the effect. In the case of the *Light Project*, a team of people guided the project, including formal members of the "leadership team" and non-members of the "leadership team." In this way, the term leadership might cause confusion. I prefer to think of this team as catalysts. By using the term catalysts, I intend to suggest that these individuals caused significant increased reactions in the project and

their actions precipitated other critical efforts. In the *Light Project*, I can identify at least seven catalyzing roles: the mission catalyst, the programmatic catalyst, the assurance catalyst, operational catalyst, the network catalyst, the achievement catalyst, and the aesthetic catalyst. In this partnership, different individuals assumed these catalyzing roles, but one can easily image one person serving multiple functions or multiple people assuming a single role (See Figure 10).

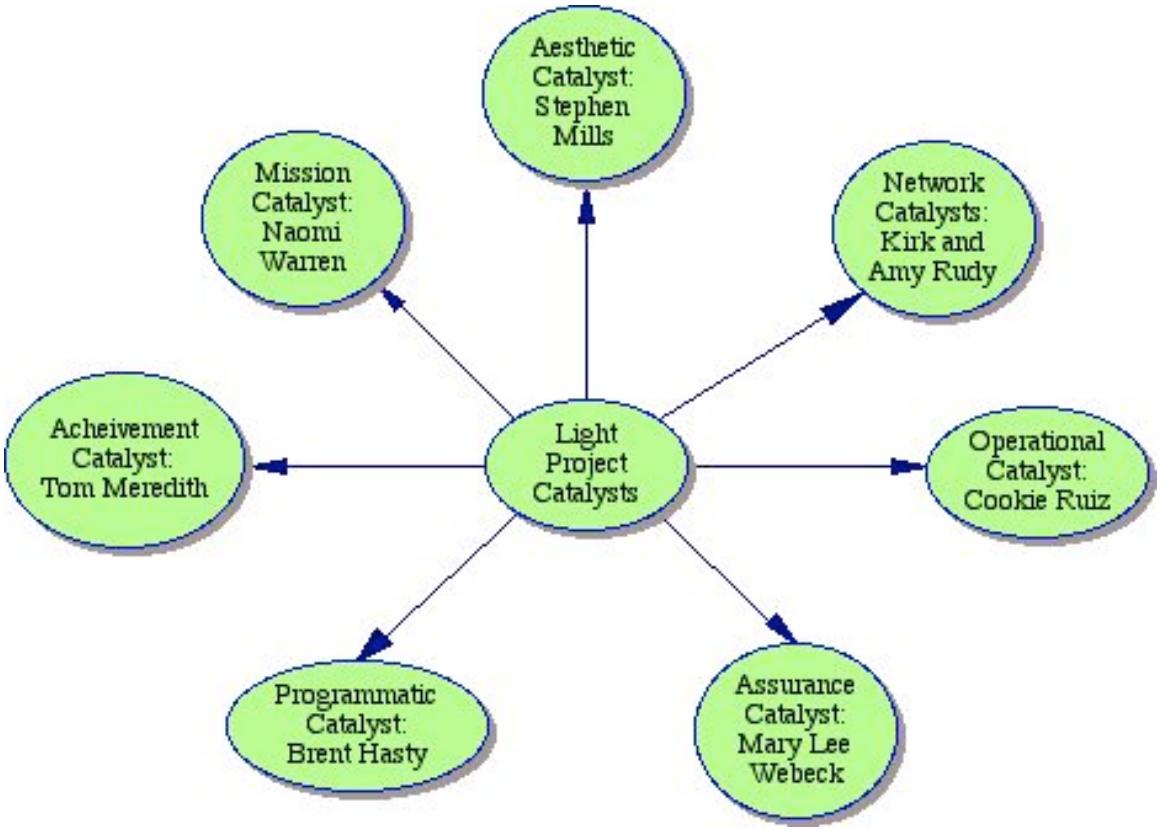

Figure 10: The *Light Project* Catalysts

Programmatic Catalyst: Brent Hasty

I served as the design catalyst. With links to each discipline, I brought a certain perspective on the potentials and limits for each discipline. I also maintained the closest

relationships across the discipline. Using my experience as a former program director, I could draft an acceptable design strategy for the group to build upon. In this case, I had a design philosophy that I could use to argue for the inclusion or exclusion of proposed activities. The combination of experience, philosophy and relationships allowed my to provide a catalyzing role.

Assurance Catalyst: Mary Lee Webeck

Mary Lee Webeck served as an assurance catalyst for the *Light Project*, probably the most abstract of the catalytic roles. Webeck used her status as an academic and as a trusted colleague to serve in a touchstone role. Using her storehouses of trust, she could encourage Stephen to take the risk to choreograph the ballet. She could provide assurance to Naomi that she would remain safe in sharing her testimony. Her expertise in the Holocaust would provide assurance of content. I knew Mary Lee would edit our words and images if they proved either historically inaccurate or insensitive to survivors. Ruiz described her role as "very much a guide. I looked to her a touchstone, having a mass of knowledge on the topic and educational expertise, plus the relationship with the [Warren] family" (Interview 2005). This notion of a touchstone seemed critical to the success of our partnership.

Aesthetic Catalyst: Stephen Mills

Stephen Mills served as the aesthetic catalyst. More than simply providing the artistic creation, Mills provided an aesthetic to the project that established an organizing set of principles guiding the work. The aesthetic framework included reliance on a minimal style incorporating the void, an avoidance of sensationalist horrors and stereotypical iconography, an insistence on portraying life before and after. The

principles were communicated most graphically in his desire to shift from the image designed for the Ballet Austin Season brochure (See Illustration 71) and opted for the use of what we called the Treeman (See Illustration 72). Ruiz commented, "Once we had Treeman I knew exactly what this production would feel like" (Interview 2005).

Illustration 71: Original image designed for the Ballet Austin season brochure.

Illustration 72: Logo for *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project*.

Operational Catalyst: Cookie Ruiz

Cookie Ruiz was a catalyzing force for the operations of the project. She took responsibility for much of the infrastructure of the project. Bringing her immense skills as a manager, plus the resources of her organization, positioned her to fulfill the operational catalyst role. Managing the administrative, financial, and marketing demands of the *Light Project*, she often worked late into the night. She said the *Light Project* began professionally, but became a personal passion (Interview 2005).

Mission Catalyst: Naomi Warren

Naomi Warren served as the catalyst for the mission of the project. Not only was her testimony central to the loose plot of the ballet, she also made the abstractions and enormity of the Holocaust personal. Ruiz put it this way:

> The numbers are so big you literally can't wrap logic around them. Our lives are so easy, but to meet Naomi you learn something about perseverance. She is such an elegant woman, who has created an incredible family, who survived against all odds and logic. This is her heritage, one that she didn't choose, but one that she didn't let deny her a life and her happiness (Interview, December 2005).

Naomi served as an embodiment of the mission. The story of her experience made concrete the depth of the issues under consideration. Speaking to the leadership inspired their work. As Kirk said:

> It is hard for me to describe the emotions I felt and continue to feel about being able to spend time with Naomi Warren. She is magical to me. It was one of those experiences I'll treasure for the rest of my life. I can't begin to thank you enough for creating this gift for our community and for allowing me to be a part of it (Rudy, Personal communication, January 26, 2005).

Her magical qualities permeated the organization. Cookie gave her staff copies of Naomi's photograph for the holidays. Five staff members, including Cookie, still keep her picture at their desks. Cookie described the way in which she catalyzed the mission

this way, “By allowing us to walk this difficult emotional road, you are helping us open the hearts and minds of a community that truly wants to be the best it can be…. Your magic is spreading” (Ruiz, personal communication, January 26, 2005). As the mission catalyst, Naomi became the compass, offering Mills the deeply personal assurance to mount the ballet and then provided her approval to present the ballet to a wider audience.

Network Catalysts: Kirk and Amy Rudy

Kirk and Amy Rudy assembled the financial and human resources necessary to implement the project. As the funding relationship analysis shows (See Figure 8, p.155), Kirk played a major role in fund raising. His capacity to assemble leaders in the community with influence created the opportunity for this project to happen within a short timeline. He created a group with which people wanted to be associated. If he didn’t have direct contact with key individuals, he could activate people who could. His wife, Amy played a key role in the support of his efforts. Together, they catalyzed of network of people necessary to perform the work.

Achievement Catalyst: Thomas Meredith

Tom Meredith catalyzed the *Light Project* to exceed its own lofty ambitions. Tom inspired our group to think big: to bring in former President’s to speak, to tackle the tough issues of contemporary genocide, to ask Democratic and Republican Governors to share the chair of the project or encourage us to contract the Coexistence exhibit without secured underwriting. His significant financial resources gave credibility to his ambitious ideas. His tremendous energy and passion for the subject inspired many in the group to succeed, certainly me. Cookie suggests he might have even inspired himself:

> He made such an amazing leap from the *Light Project* to current day genocides. He is about to fund his next project keeping the word about genocide in front of

> people. The *Light Project* brought his focus to this issue, and he is the first to say that. With the amount of capacity he has, financially and personally, this project in a real sense I believe is helping him more fully realize his purpose on earth. I have heard him express that. It's amazing that art can unleash a philanthropist on a cause like this. Tom Meredith is a young man… who knows what good he can do (Interview, 2006).

Tom provided leadership in a number of ways, financial and practical, but he catalyzed achievement.

RELATIONSHIPS OF CONTINUAL ASSURANCES

The literature suggests that successful arts partnerships maintain an alignment of goals among participants (Dreeszen, 1992; McCarthy, 2004; Seidel, 2001; Remer, 1996). While the *Light Project* seems to have met this criterion for a successful partnership, an examination of the case suggests more complexities to the partnership's continued coalescence. While consensus of goal identification seems essential to the successful practice of partnerships, the *Light Project* suggests managing a successful partnership requires more than unanimous goal identification. Successful partnerships require continual assurances of goals. Ruiz described the partnership process this way:

> I've been involved in so many collaborations… I know how hard it is. Collaborations are held together by a silk thread. This one never snapped. Traditionally, it's ego or fear or trust that break apart collaborations, but it didn't happen here. I don't know why other than I think that Stephen's concept of making art the conduit and I think there was trust built early on. You [Brent's] and Stephen's instincts were pure and right on in building the trust. Asking Naomi for permission on behalf of survivors. The timeline worked. Tom wasn't trustful of arts organizations. I felt that you led the collaboration on a foundation of rock. You placed people's feelings at the highest priority. You were cognizant of the trust of these stories and treated them as gold. At any moment it could have unfurled. I credit you all with the building of the collaboration (Ruiz, Interview 2005).

In this one brief exchange, Ruiz describes the several kinds of goal-related assurances that are necessary in partnerships: vision, design, trust, authority, integrity and organizational capacity. In this way, the *Light Project* encouraged me to reconsider goals not as end states to be reached together, but as ways of interacting. Cookie's late night email created capacity assurances, Kirk's continual fundraising and partner building assured our networking capacity, Stephen's aesthetic production continued to assure our artistic capacity. While goal identification brought people to the table, it was the constant practice of assurance that kept everyone at the table…and more or less satisfied.

FINDING THE DEEP POLITIC IN PUBLIC SCHOLARSHIP

Fostering this project represents my attempt at working in a community to change the status quo. Through its enactment, I came to understand some possibilities for the arts, for education and civic engagement. I also came to understand something about my identity as a scholar in addressing problems that face our communities. Problems that rise to the level of public concern often combine multiple disciplines, complicated histories, conflicting agendas and carry with them a complex of contestations such that even the identification of the problem is questioned. Project like *Light/The Holocaust and Humanity Project* demonstrate how academics can enter into these issues with a collaborative stance as "a matter of shared concern" (Ramaley, 2006, p. 86). By integrating academic discourses into a broader public discourse at a community level, then extending the understandings through both public action and reflective writing, scholars reconceptualize the notion of academic service as public scholarship (Ramaley, 2006; Boyer, 1990; Gitlin, 2005). Public scholarship reframes academic identity in the community by refocusing the services of civic action from the individual contributions of citizens to a profession of social change. Public scholarship adds a direct civic component

to academic engagement. Wharton-Michael links this academic engagement to democratic practice:

> Public scholarship initiatives support learning in community contexts and teach students to engage in the public sphere by using their knowledge to effect positive change. Moreover, public scholarship encourages students to move beyond resignation, protest and self-sacrifice – Americans' default forms of engagement – and pioneer new innovative ways to address pressing local, national, and global issues (Wharton-Michael et al, 2006, p. 64-65).

Through the *Light Project*, I began my personal attempts to move beyond "resignation, protest and self-sacrifice" towards a new way of being engaged in my community. If identity works as Dorothy Holland suggests, that "people tell others who they are, but even more important, they tell themselves and then try to act as they say they are," then I would like introduce myself as a public scholar in search of the deep politic (Holland et al, 1998, p. 3).

Appendix A

DECENCY AND DATA: BETWEEN SENSATIONALISM AND SELF-REGULATION

Introduction

Hi, my name is Brent Hasty. I love Lily Tomlin. One of my favorite routines she and her partner/writer Jane Wagner created is the "Worry Sketch" from *The Search for Signs of Intelligent Life in the Universe* (1986). She says, "I worry all the time." She worries about the audience and her performance. She worries that if olive oil is made from olives and corn oil is made from corn, what is baby oil made from. One thing she says she doesn't worry about is that god exists. She is certain God exists, but she worries that God has forgotten that we exist. I worry a lot too, particularly about this paper. I worry that the struggles of a novice researcher won't be interesting or worse, will be considered naïve. I worry about what you think at the intersections of dramatic narrative and sensationalism, decency and regulation.

I worry about the possibility of sidelining important issues of research; or representation; or trauma; or the "difficult knowledge" of Holocaust education; rather than attending to my struggles of reporting and collecting data-- my difficulties in coming to more fully understand what it means to research ethically. Motivated by this constellation of worries, of saying the wrong thing and not saying the right thing, I began to investigate my decisions around the forms of data I chose to collect and when I choose to collect it. I began to more fully consider the ways in which the representation of the data I had collected impacted the stories I was willing to tell or perform publicly. Given the emotionally charged research setting, I was resisting some data forms in favor of

others in order to tell the story I experienced in a particular way. I make this confession not to suggest I went in to the research project with predetermined outcomes, but to remind us of the ways in which our cultural comfort or discomfort with intense emotion, vulnerabilities, and even our desires for dramatic narratives influence the research process, at least mine. This process paper serves as a way for me to reflect on the comfortable and uncomfortable silences I was creating while I was attempting to perform more ethical research. My performance today tries to provide some sensations – a kind of installation to be wrestled with – rather than a presentation of conclusions. Could sharing some of my data, in say a video form of representation be a form of disrespect, of kind of "saying the wrong thing" or in resisting the re-presentation - either documenting the interaction or in later reporting - be a form of "not saying the right thing," favoring a decency towards another person in a traumatic moment over a camera operating researcher, or was I simply self-regulating.

I load the words disrespect and decency here purposefully. I want to amplify the ethical stakes for myself. Ellsworth (1997) asks us to respond to Holocaust texts by considering the consequences of their reading. Here I ask that same perspective taking of myself as a researcher. What are the consequences of reading the emotional events that occur in Holocaust education as a text? What are the implications of collecting records of these difficult educative moments? In what ways do the frames constructing my understandings of the Holocaust echo through my research of Holocaust education, interrupting, resisting and repeating through representation and performance of that data. Throughout this paper I will show you field notes from research I made through images. They are documentary and analytical.

Why research around the Holocaust?

(Door picture)

There exists in America a kind of urgency to the need to understand the Holocaust that is palpably different from other important historical moments, like the Civil War. The Holocaust serves iconically as a cautionary tale against cruelty, prejudice and hate. Abzug (1985) says, "Our culture has made scenes of … what we now call the Holocaust into universal symbols of humankind's inhuman capacities" (p. 172). Each performative scene calls in a battery of tropes framing our understanding; I draw on a Foucaudian notion of discourse here. The stories of the Holocaust in American often move quickly from fear and suffering to redemptive lessons. The light in doorway distracts us from the walls stained blue from the Zyclon-B gas. Instead redemptive elements like tales of heroism, sacrifice, martyrdom, overcoming severe adversities, and the transcendent power of love over hate run through the discourses defining the Holocaust. Tending toward a cultural normalization of redemption through Holocaust education, scholars like Grant, in the guide book for *March of the Living* (1992), describe in developmental terms, acceptance as a final stage in which "pupils were able to be 'hopeful' having worked through their own reactions by talking to others and drawing upon their religious traditions" (quoted in Burke, 2003, p. 56) Moral discourses circulate with historical discourses, particularly as Americans focus on victims, particularly survivors. As one fellow said, "This whole thing isn't about the Holocaust, it's about the lessons that people should have learned way before the genocide" (Participant 10). Michman (2003) points out the ways in which national context, or "linguistic-cultural sphere" crafts stories that are "influenced by its own collective memory and contemporary agenda" (p. 379). He offers the Germans focus on the perpetrators, the Israeli focus on the victim and the

French focus on the resistance and liberation "bystanders" as examples. Without addressing the potentially reductive quality of these nationalistic explanations, they do begin to illustrate the ways in which social discourses influence the construction of understanding of the Holocaust. Usher and Edwards (1994) remind us, "A discourse author-ises certain people to speak and correspondingly silences others, or at least makes their voices less authoritative. A discourse is therefore exclusionary" (p.90). Morris (2001), for one, charts ways in which these hopeful discourses diminish our understanding by reducing despair. Quoting Young, "Events of the Holocaust are not only shaped post-factum in their narration, but… determined as they unfolded by the schematic ways in which they were apprehended, expressed and acted upon" (Young, 1990, p. 5). Quoting Young: "Literary and historical truths of the Holocaust may not be entirely separable" (Young, 1990, p. 1) It is this post-factum construction that concerns me. How am I authorizing? What cultural constructions do I bring to the research as I attempt to understand the constructions of the Holocaust? What assumptions about video, photographer, and writing do I impose?

The Sad Tourist

(Bus sad tourist picture)

Sontag writes, "People want to weep. Pathos, in the form of narrative, does not wear out" (Sontag 2003, p. 83). Holocaust tourism is big business. So is Holocaust research. Both enterprises create SAD tourists, literal and figurative. Much has been written about the tourisms of research. My data for this paper comes from two tours stemming from an Holocaust education collaboration among Regional Holocaust Museum, City Ballet and The University. Regional Holocaust Museum hosts a week-long Holocaust education intensive seminar using resources including the museums collection,

and intense interactions with guest scholars, survivors and liberators. The fellows are 20 men and women, mostly in their early 20's, working in the University's secondary and elementary teacher certification programs. The participants maintained reflective journals created aesthetic works and agreed to be video taped throughout the fellowship. I joined these fellows as both a researcher and as an "Artistic fellow."

The images and autoethnographic data are drawn from a 14-day trip to concentration camps in Germany, Poland and the Czech Republic organized by the regional Holocaust Museum. I kept a reflective journal and used still images to record my experiences and emotions. Picture taking, like writing in my journal, was a form of reflective meaning making.

Lang suggests that Holocaust historiography is limited by the constraints of the imagination bounded by historical, aesthetic and moral conditions (Lang, 2000). The exploration of the camps and the fellowship activities brought up imaginaries causing powerful and deep emotions. We cried, laughed and we shut down. Our expectations of emotions were both satisfied and missed in its absence. For example fellows suggested: "It's shocking. It's overwhelming. Chilling. It empties me" (Participant 17) and "I thought I would be very emotional this week, and I have teared up at least 5 times already, but its not affecting me the way I expected. I'm not sure what this means… maybe it will happen later in the week… I don't know." (Participant 7) Despite Mintz's call that "Urgently needed is a set of critical discriminations that can counter the tendency towards hushed, reverential mystification that is endemic to much discourse of the Holocaust" (Mintz, 2004) this hushed reverential mystification played throughout the discourse presented in the fellowship and in the tour. In fact both tours were designed with this end. Mediated experiences with carefully selected narratives designed to

produce an emotional understanding. The experiences were designed in narratively dramatic ways.

Drama and Decency in Reporting

(Shoe barrack)

I admire scholars like Felman & Laub, Britzman, and Morris who, like others unnamed here, use a psychoanalytic frame to understand the silences and resistances in Holocaust education. I leave that important work to them and focus here on the narrative demands of representing that understanding. Specifically I struggle with tensions of representation and narrative emplotment. Emotionally dense data provides a cinematically rich narrative. Conquergood's warning for performance ethnography serves us well here too. He encourages avoiding the "Enthusiast's Infatuation," a superficial tourists representation, or the "Curator's Exhibitionism" that sensationalizes experiences for the tourists gaze (Denzin, 2003). I struggle to present sensational data in ways that communicate wisely to the reader/audience.

Data like:

(REPEATED THREE TIMES WITHOUT PAUSE – INTERPRETING EACH REPETITION DISTINCTLY WITH DIFFERENT EMPHASIS)

> "She dug her father's grave with her own hands after searching through a pile of dead bodies for his. I really don't understand how everyone in the room did not break down. But in a way I do because I only broke down on the inside. And I've been broken all day." (Participant 13)

> "She dug her father's grave with her own hands after searching through a pile of dead bodies for his. I really don't understand how everyone in the room did not break down. But in a way I do because I only broke down on the inside. And I've been broken all day." (Participant 13)

> "She dug her father's grave with her own hands after searching through a pile of dead bodies for his. I really don't understand how everyone in the room did not break down. But in a way I do because I only broke down on the inside. And I've been broken all day." (Participant 13)

Despite her willingness to be taped, does it lack decency to keep cameras rolling? It doesn't seem right.

(Young victim – FLASHES ON SCREEN)

(Doll Image lingers)

The words seemed acceptably guarded to show, the dramatic presentation less so. Videotaping, while methodologically sound, is ethically questionable. Some researchers suggest we should look beyond the "juicy bits" to find the everyday and the ordinary in the data. This rarely exists in Holocaust research on Holocaust education or counters the narratives that frame our understanding of the Holocaust. Understanding the Holocaust requires the exploration of the extremes. Sontag suggests "Perhaps the only people with the right to look at images of suffering is this extreme order are those who could do something to alleviate it… or those who could learn from it" (Sontag 2003, p. 43).

(Young victim – LINGERS ON SCREEN)

(Switch to Doll Image)

While this gives the presenter an ethical out, it doesn't resolve the dilemma for the videographer. And what are the consequences to the presentation of that data. Lang encourages historiographers to consider "the understanding toward which they urge their readers" (2000, p. 27). Fellow says: "I want to vomit. My body is revolting the thought of more exposure to the graphic photos of the Holocaust. My eyes cannot handle any more images of Nazi propaganda or their handiwork." (Participant 20)

(Young victim – LONGER ON SCREEN)

(Switch to Doll Image)

Quoting Sontag, "No moral charge attaches to the representation of these cruelties. Just the provocation: Can you look at this? There is the satisfaction of being able to look at the image without flinching. There is the pleasure of flinching" (Sontag 2003, p. 41). Is this what the psychoanalytics are talking about? Interestingly, the fellows wrote prolifically about detachment:

> "Throughout the past few days, I have seen people cry and become emotional (esp. during the survivor testimony) Immediately I began to feel a sense of guilt because I'm not crying. Normally I'm an emotional person, but death has never really been something that gets to me very easily." (Participant 5)
>
> "The horror wasn't my reality, so it's hard for me to fully grasp the emotion." (Participant 5)
>
> "Too much information to process. Speechlessness. I need laughter after this." (Participant 4)
>
> "These images I've seen, Helen's voice, Naomi's voice are all a part of my memory. My heart hurts for these people, and yet, where are my tears? I almost feel like I have no right to cry." (Participant 1)
>
> "Though I was not crying on the outside I was crying on the inside." (Participant 15)

Again Sontag helps me understand how to read the reports of traumatic-like events:

> "It is felt that there is something wrong with the abstract of reality offered by photography; that one has no right to experience the suffering of others at a distance, denude of its raw power; that we pay too high a human (or moral) price for those hitherto admired qualities of vision – the standing back from aggressiveness of the world which frees us for observation and for elective attention. But this is only to describe the function of the mind itself" (Sontag 2003, p. 118).

But she leaves the problem of how to record them untouched. The difference between the preservationist museum-like impulse in camps like Auschwitz and Majdanek stand in stark contrast to the meditative, cemetery-like camps like Sachsenhaussen. This same question of representation exists in my representation dilemma. Morris recently follows a long line of survivors and scholars that suggest that to desensationalize tells the wrong story. While maybe unimaginable from my perspective and perhaps yours, not for Naomi or Warren or Ruth or any survivor.

(Sachsenhaussen Image)

The most difficult times for me as a researcher were those moments when the expectations of time, or how I was to consider time were confounded. When I wanted to be in the moment comforting like a friend and behind the camera collecting data like a researcher. When the tour guide wanted to show me the barracks to the left and the fence to the right describing the past when I wanted to mourn the dead in the present. Or the haunting present-ness of a manicured and tended Auschwitz collided with a desire for it not to feel tended and alive but rather dead and disintegrating. You see I worry how to become a more ethical researcher. I worry about how I can increasingly tell stories that say more of the right things and say less of the wrong things. How can I be more ethical in the performance of: Interpretation and representation, decencies and regulations, drama and sensationalism.

Appendix B

PENUMBRAL MOMENTS AND LIMINAL SPACES

Interrogatory Text

As cultural critics, we follow Lather's call to assume the "intermediary position between artist and scientist" to more fully interrogate our practice (Lather, 1997, p. 239). Drawing on the Benjamin's methodology of the imaginary (see Lather, 1997) we have constructed a dramatic text that explores the ethics of teaching in a museum fellowship. Following the grammotopraxis methods outlined by Pensky, quotes found in the participant's journals were separated into fragments. The fragments were sorted and resorted thematically. Fragments were recombined into dramatic form to discover new meanings. The results of this process tell us almost nothing about the participants whose words are being recrafted. However, this process provides the authors of this script (and teachers of the fellowship) a way of rethinking the outcomes of the fellowship by examining our reactions to the student's words. In this text there is no unity of time, place or person. Each line is attributed to the participant through an assigned number. "LINE (##)"

Penumbral Moments and Liminal Spaces

(All characters seated in chairs facing Aphorist standing at a podium giving a lecture.
As each character speaks, they turn to face the audience lit by individual spots.)

Hope: I know it seems cheesy, but I just feel inspired as though I was supposed to be here and that I will make a difference. (19) Although part of me feels naive for not being able to relate to the Holocaust, I have been reminded over and over

again how blessed I am to live where I do and feel safe and respected in my country. (7)

Protector: Although I felt like I had a pretty good background coming into the seminar, I felt that I would encounter a lot of new information. (14)

I began this week with my emotions in check. If I did cry, it would be OK. (9)

Detached: This week has found me opening up more than I ever would. (9)

Aphorist: It takes a lot to be brave in the world of fear. (17)

Protector I am not a very emotional person…. (10)

Identifier: Normally I am an emotional person, (5)

All: (repeat) I am (/not) an emotional person. (10, 5)

Protector: …and feel to a large extent people control their own destinies. (10)

Detached: … however death has never really been something that gets to me very easily. (5)

Identifier: In my essay, I talked about how I wanted to know more, now I wish I hadn't. (19) Yesterday I suddenly felt the weight and intense emotion of the museum really hit me. (15)

(Stage goes dark, single spot on Activist)

Activist: Immediately I began to feel a sense of guilt because I'm not crying. (5) I thought I would be very emotional this week. I have teared up 5 times – but it's not affecting me the way I expected. (7)

Aphorist: No one can ever take away your education. (NW)

Penumbral moment: In the figured world of Holocaust education, I have come to understand learners expect intense emotional experiences, particularly immense

sadness (Holland et al, 1997). Participants express surprise at the ways in which the fellowship creates emotional reactions both greater and less than they anticipated, and not just sadness. Holocaust education creates an emotional penumbra of indeterminable range and degree of feelings. The penumbral cannot be predetermined, either by the person experiencing it, or the instructor, but it can only be expected.

Ponder: How can we be responsible to the emotional penumbra?

(Characters applaud. Aphorist comes downstage of the podium. All characters surround and congratulate. Protector hangs back.)

Protector: I am not an emotional person, but their stories brought tears to my eyes. (10) (Joins the group.)

Protector: (Talking to speaker) You have every right to cry. (12)

Identifier: Being able to hear personal experiences changes everything. (10)

(Leaving the speaker, talking among themselves)

Activist: Survivors see the world differently – they look for opportunity. (16)

All: (overlapping references to a different survivor) Walter was so amazing.

Hope: She a special person. (5)

Identifier: She's more of a person than a survivor. (5)

Protector: I wouldn't be able to pick him out of a crowd. (4) I had to make a conscious effort to accept what was being said as real and when I did this, my heart began to ache. (19)

Detached: At times I feel ashamed because I'm not sure if I will ever really understand, not like Naomi and Helen understand. (19)

Hope: It surprised me that all of the survivors were such vivacious people. If they are suffering they don't show it. (5) It's astounding that after 40 years later Helen and Naomi can speak of not having hate for anyone. (10)

Activist: I wish I had their ability to forgive and not be bitter. (10)

Aphorist: Bitterness does not restore humanity. (18)

Liminal: The Holocaust maintains a liminal space in Western culture, betwixt and between history and iconography. Likewise, survivors of the Holocaust maintain a liminal identity for the participants in the fellowship, betwixt and between mythic and human. They constructed a heroic identity for the survivors, complicated only by their capacity for such extraordinariness. Like the artifacts of the museum exhibition, survivors are set apart in reverential, but hushed, ways. They adored, they mystified, the survivors.

Ponder: How can we not want our students to have heroes, regardless of how uncomplicated?

Hope: Today, I feel so much better. Instead of the sad, upset emotions, hope replaced it. (15) I have seen the difference one person can make. (7)

Identifier: I think that this special bond is something we all need to with one another to truly learn the lessons of the Holocaust. (15)

Protector: I feel that I have gotten past the content and gotten to the importance of the Holocaust. (10)

Activist: Why do we have teachers? What is the point of teaching history, math, science and English? Not so everyone will grow up to be doctors, lawyers or astronauts. The objective is to teach people about love and respect. (10)

Aphorist: I may not be part of the problem but I can always be a part of the solution. (15)

Identifier: (Agreeing as if finishing the thought) He wants to lock it away, but at the same time he knows he can't because he must tell his story. And I feel that way too. I want to lock it away but I cant because it is my turn to tell his story. It is my duty. (19)

Activist: He told me not to worry about telling his story right away – that he would rather me just call my Mom and tell her I love her. (19) Evangelism is not supposed to be forceful but loving. (20)

Aphorist: Love is not just a feeling, but an action. (20)

Voice: The Holocaust feels like a part of who I am because of the intense personal connections I made this week. (20)

Aphorist: Teacher's don't teach subjects they teach people. (10)

Liminal: For the fellows, the critical educational content exists not in the lectures or the exhibitions, or even in the details of the survivors, but in the relationships. What implications does this suggest for museum education? for Holocaust education once survivors are no longer living?

Ponder: Given the resonance of the survivor relationship, how critical was the museum and classroom activity?

Detached: I was once again, just a student in a classroom, learning about something that didn't affect me. And then something would be said and tears would come into my eyes before I even realized what was happening. (19)

Identifier: I wonder how many people honestly believed in their "cause". (7)

Activist: I had to get out of this painful place – I couldn't stand to look or talk about anything dealing with the Holocaust anymore for the day. (11) I think this is too great. (3)

Identifier: I can't stand to dehumanize those faces by looking at them as they lay there helpless and unable to ask me to stop looking. (11)

Hope: The hurt my heart feels for the victims must lead me to action. (20)

Activist: I want to vomit. My body is revolting to the thought of more exposure to the graphic photos of the Holocaust. My eyes can't handle any more images of Nazi propaganda nor their handiwork. (20)

Religious: How could god give us free will knowing we could do horrible stuff to each other. (20)

Penumbra: The emotional penumbra included a deep hurt, unanticipated by many of the fellows. Many struggled with paradox of the human spirit. How could their construction of the "lesson of the survivors" coexist with the "lessons of the perpetrators?" How could the human spirit be both good and evil?

Ponder: Does presenting complexity dash hope?

Aphorist: It only takes one person to start a revolution. (7)

Activist: The people that I see will be remembered and honored through the voice I give them. (20)

Identifier: I'm a perpetrator. I've been one. (4)

Religious: Sixty percent of Germans were Lutherans at the time of Hitler…I'm Lutheran. (7)

Identifier: My dad is handicapped and I keep thinking they would have killed him. (19)

Hope: He said my smile was beautiful. No one has ever said that to me before. (16)

Penumbra: Despite the enormity of the subject, or the risks of the imagination, participants made personal connections expressing the direct link between their experience and that of the players in the historical event. As teachers, we have few insights into the penumbral spaces in historical learning that holds the direct personal link with the student. We have so little insight into what characteristics will allow them to personalize the experience.

Ponder: How does personalizing lessen the dimension of the Holocaust?

(Each character stands at the podium, to give their testimony)

Identifier: I think our late night philosophical talks about life in general have really helped us to take a closer look at who each of us rally are as individuals as opposed to students who share common interests. (18) I've changed into a more compassionate and understanding person for the differences that people have in their lives. (11)

Activist: My calling in life is perfectly clear. I must love and teach others to love. I must respect and teach others to respect. (20) My perception has changed. I believe that for the rest of my life, I will focus my lessons and my thoughts toward love and promoting that idea. (10)

Identifier: I will center my teaching on love and acceptance. (4)

Protector: I will do my best to challenge prejudicial views. (3)

Detached: I will not lose hope. (16)

Religious: Alive is not alone. (17)

Aphorist: The human spirit will prevail. (19)

Liminal: The participant's words are warming.
Ponder: Does understanding occur in more than words?

Aphorist: Compassion is not sufficient. (20)

Identifier: I never expected to get involved in Holocaust studies, however now I'm eager to stay in touch with the Museum and to continue learning. (13)

Detached: How will I really be able to teach? (3)

Activist: If you get more curriculum can you email it to me? (10)

###Scene

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Vita

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